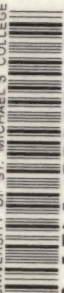


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Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries.

An attempt to illustrate the History of their Suppression, with an Appendix and Maps showing the situation of the religious houses at the time of their dissolution. By

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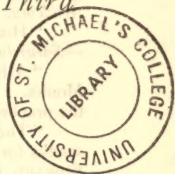
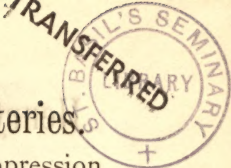
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From the "Guardian," July 4th, 1888.

Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries: an Attempt to Illustrate the History of their Suppression. By FRANCIS AIDAN GASQUET, Monk of the Order of St. Benedict, sometime Prior of St. Gregory's Monastery, Downside, Bath.

The ruined abbeys of England recall one of the greatest events of our national history. Upon their grey and crumbling walls still play the sunset rays of departed feudalism. They are venerable records of a romantic past, picturesque embodiments of mediæval piety, vestiges of a once active agency to which England owes a large portion of her religion, her learning, and even her material civilization—memorials of an institution which has enshrined its spirit in a noble literature, which has breathed its soul into a glorious architecture, and which is consecrated by thousands of saintly lives spent in its service. The ruins, moreover, stand as silent, yet eloquent, protests against the uncontrolled despotism of rulers, witnesses against an act of spoliation which is of ominous precedent. With that inconsistent homage which Henry's tyranny paid to legality, and with those formal scruples which marked his most unconstitutional proceedings, the King justified the dissolution of the monasteries by a defamation of the character of his victims. A step which, in part at least, was actuated by greed, was thus transformed into a necessary and salutary measure of drastic reform. The plan has proved but too successful. As Mr. Gasquet says in the volume now before us, "A wholesome horror of monk or monastery has been imparted with early knowledge at a mother's knee—the teaching first imbibed and latest lost." But though the true ground for the dissolution may have been in part rapacity, and though its alleged ground was the personal character of the inmates of the monasteries, it would be unfair to ignore the political aspect of the question, the danger of dividing the kingdom against itself, the possible conflict between the profession and the patriotism of men who owed allegiance not only to the King of England, but also to another political and temporal potentate, the Pope of Rome. The history of the dissolution of the monasteries has been often told by partial Protestants. If there were no other reason for congratulating Mr. Gasquet on the completion of his first volume, we should welcome its appearance from love of fair play and bare justice. Our sympathies are entirely with the author in his learned, careful, and successful vindication of the personal character of the monks. But, even assuming that Henry was largely influenced by the desire to fill his treasury, and without defending either his rapacity or his subterfuge, it is impossible not to recognize the difficulty of the King's position. He felt the need of giving to his actions the respectable sanction of constitutional precedent, but he feared to rely upon its true justification, lest he might provoke a popular outburst. He therefore pleaded, what we think Mr. Gasquet has proved to be, a cruelly false excuse. He took his stand not on political necessity, but on outraged public morality. There must have been thousands of influential persons who connived at the act of spoliation, because they saw that it cut an inextricable knot. Naturally enough, Mr. Gasquet does not take this view of the dissolution of the monasteries; but we put it forward, because, unless this aspect of the question is considered, we rise from the perusal of the volume before us in indignant wonder that such injustice could have been perpetrated in England upon so transparent a pretext, even at the height of the Tudor despotism. Mr. Gasquet appositely quotes the following passage from Burke's "Reflections on the

French Revolution : ” — “ I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated when profit is looked for in the punishment. An enemy is a bad witness, a robber is a worse.” The description of the condition of the monasteries given in the letters and reports of Henry’s visitors is bad. But is it true? What is the worth of the visitors’ word? This is the question which Mr. Gasquet proposes to answer. He investigates the history of the dissolution, utilizes a mass of scattered material, still unpublished and unconsulted, and treats “ the suppression not as an episode of a greater subject, but as an object of special inquiry.” His sympathies are naturally engaged, but he has striven, and, we may add, with success, “ to avoid anything like presenting or pleading a case, which, indeed, I felt would defeat my own purpose.” The result is that he has produced the first instalment of a work which promises to be a really valuable monograph on a great event in our national annals, and removes from impartial minds a mass of misconception which has accumulated almost undisturbed for three centuries and a half. Mr. Gasquet commences with an admirable portrait of the monks of the sixteenth century, a portrait which in purity of tone and warmth of colouring admittedly falls below the glowing and exalted ideal conceived and realized in the days of primitive fervour, but which, equally incontestably, rises far above the level of ordinary men. The monastic system was interwoven into the social, political, and ecclesiastical organization of the country. The abbots were great noblemen and local magnates : —

As such they went *pari passu* with baron or earl of the noblest lineage. On the blazoned Roll of the Lords the Lord Richard Whiting and the Lord Hugh Farringdon went hand in hand with a Howard and a Talbot. This individual ennoblement indicated by the form of a title is striking. Whiting and Farringdon do not walk merely as the Abbot of Glaston and the Abbot of Reading, but in the roll of English peers they still hold the name by which they were known when playing as children in the country manor-house or poor man’s cottage. In the letter books of Durham priory the chiefs of the Cliffords and the Nevilles address the prior as their equal in no mere words of empty form. If on occasion the layman strikes a higher tone, to which the monk responds in gentleness, it does not affect the ring of trusty and sincere friendship which is caught throughout the whole correspondence. Nor is there anything surprising in this when the character of the monastic life is realized. The monk of Durham from his earliest years combined simplicity of life with surroundings of palatial grandeur and a state and ceremony equal to that of courts, and yet more measured. As time passed on, he grew from obedience to command, and naturally, without perceiving it, the peasant’s son became the equal of the peer. And all this was done without appeal to principles of democratic levelling. The heralds’ “ visitations ” commence at the moment when the doom of the monasteries was already fixed. Up to that time the art of sifting out the “ gentleman ” from the “ no-gentleman,” which under the Tudors and first Stuarts grew to a pitch of perfection, was not yet evolved ; and it may be safe to say that the monasteries, in ages which, if any, might seem fatal to it, kept up the idea of personal nobility.

The monasteries formed an element in English social life both popular and beneficent. Monks—

Had the practice of business, and they were in touch with men of all ranks—the country gentleman, the yeoman, the artisan, the peasant, and the poor. It is no mere figure of speech when monasteries are called the common hostleries for the people of all sorts and conditions, the general refuge of the poor. The daily life of the heads and officers of every monastic house must have brought them in constant and natural contact with all classes of society. The monks were not merely anchorites enclosed in narrow walls, but were affected by all the movements of public life. They were not men of war, but, like the knight and the baron, they had to provide men for the musters. As great landowners they, more than the yeoman, were concerned in the crops and the weather. They resided on the land in the midst of their people, and the barns, farmhouses, and cottages were no less objects of their care than the roof which

covered their own heads. Beyond this, they were more than landowners to those round about them. The advisers and teachers of all, they had the work now undertaken by the guardian, the relieving officer, the parish doctor, and the schoolmaster. Their charity did not flow from public sources, yet all men expected them, as an incident of their profession, to provide for those in want, and they were well acquainted with the circumstances of those they helped. These conditions combined to ease many of the difficulties which attend the relief of the poor. "The myth of the 'fine old English gentleman,' who had a large estate, and provided every day for the poor at his gate, was realized in the case of the monks, and in their case only."*

Nor did the monasteries fall amid any such shout of general execration as would have been raised if the catalogue of iniquity contained in the "Comperta" or "Black Book" of the visitors were true. On the contrary—

On the part of the secular clergy, who might be supposed to be their natural rivals, the voice of Bishop Fisher, pre-eminent amongst them all for a love of sound learning and for piety, was raised as spokesman in their defence. Of the nobility, who afterwards shared in the plunder, many a one before the event put in a plea for the preservation of the house in which he himself was interested. The popular voice was expressed in the risings in the east and north, and at a later date in the west. It is only now, when the documentary history of the time is being revealed, that we begin to understand how narrowly these movements escaped a success, which would have changed the course of English history. The voices raised against the monks were those of Crumwell's agents, of the cliques of the new men and of his hiring scribes, who formed a crew of as truculent and filthy libellers as ever disgraced a revolutionary cause. The later centuries have taken their tale in good faith, but time is showing that the monasteries, up to the day of their fall, had not forfeited the goodwill, the veneration, the affection of the English people.

In Mr. Gasquet's skilful hands the dissolution of the monasteries assumes the proportions of a Greek tragedy. From the first there hangs over the doomed orders a remorseless power like the Fate of the Sophoclean drama, in the hands of which the monks struggle unavailingly. Mr. Gasquet traces its approach from its attack upon the alien priories and their final suppression till it first laid its hands upon the smaller monasteries of native growth under the plea of founding colleges and cathedral churches. The Friars Observant and the Carthusians were the next victims, and their sufferings are graphically described. Then follow the Visitation of the Monasteries in 1535-6, and the first Act of Suppression. From the preamble to the Act of Suppression—

(Which, it must be remembered, is practically all that is known about the measure) it would seem that Parliament had no written documents placed before it upon which to form any independent judgment as to the justice of the Act they were asked to pass. The King, we are told, made a "full declaration" of what he knew to be true from the reports of the visitors and other sources. Upon this, after a "great deliberation," the members acted. Whether the report of the visitors in any shape was also submitted to their examination will probably never be ascertained with certainty. Sanders, it is true, speaks of the "publication of the enormities,"† but this might only refer to the King's "declaration." Bishop Latimer, who was possibly present in the House of Lords, also says:—"When their enormities were first read in the Parliament House, they were so great and abominable that there was nothing but down with them, but within a while after the same Abbots were made Bishops for the saving of their pensions."‡

The King's knowledge, upon which Parliament acted, was mainly based upon the accounts of the visitations. What his "other informations may have been is uncertain;" but there is no evidence that the so-called "Black Book" was ever presented to Parliament, and none that it ever

* J. S. Brewer. *Giraldus Camb.*, iv., Pref. xxxv.

† *Schism*. Lewis's translation, p. 129.

‡ Two sermons before Ed. VI. Parker Society ed., vol. i., p. 123.

existed. The "Black Book" is not mentioned before the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and the document has completely disappeared. Its details have been supplied by the conjecture of hostile historians. If any such statement was ever drawn up it was probably in the nature of an abstract compiled from the reports of the visitors. We are thus driven back to these "Comperta" as the final source of the charges against the monks. It is in dealing with the existing documentary evidence that Mr. Gasquet is at his best; but his reasoning rests upon detailed criticism, which is convincing in its entirety, though it hardly admits of isolated illustration. He shows that comparatively few of the religious are charged with any crime; that the accusations are vague, based upon idle rumour, and not upon confessions of the accused; that they are often misleading and deceptive; that they are contradicted by Episcopal visitations as well as by reports of other royal visitors and by subsequent evidence; and that in several specific instances they totally fail. These accusations, which in themselves are thus of little value as evidence, are tainted at the source by the character and the obvious motives of the witnesses. Of Crumwell, who was the moving spirit of the movement, Mr. Gasquet says—

No single minister in England ever exercised such extensive authority, none ever rose so rapidly, and no one has ever left behind him a name covered with greater infamy and disgrace. . . . "Thomas Crumwell, the cloth carder" (to give him the style ordered by Henry VIII.), was regretted by very few in England. He had plundered and murdered defenceless men and women; he had endeavoured to rob the religious of their reputations as he had of their property; he had defrauded the people of their rights, and had seized upon the patrimony of the poor; he had deprived the sick and aged of their hospitals and places of refuge; he had driven monks and nuns from their cloisters, to wander homeless in poverty and disgrace. But his day of reckoning came at last, and in merited ignominy his career closed.

Crumwell had chosen fit instruments for his work—Legh, Layton, Ap Rice, and London:—

They were not troubled with scruples of conscience or unnerved by tenderness in effecting the end their master had in view. "The inquisitors," remarks Fuller, the historian, "were men who well understood the message they were sent on, and would not come back without a satisfactory answer to him who sent them, knowing themselves to be no losers thereby."* They were, and professed themselves to be, completely dependent on Crumwell. That they would not hesitate to serve him and their own interests, even at the expense of their honesty, is made clear from their own letters.

They were obscene, profligate, and perjured witnesses, men of prurient mind and depraved nature, servile tools in the hands of their master Crumwell. Their avowed object was plunder, and the charges made against the religious were means to attain that end. Mr. Gasquet thus concludes:—

The character of the men upon whose word the monasteries have been defamed would in these days be defended by no honest historian. No other evidence is forthcoming, and it may be fairly asked, in the name of common sense no less than of sacred justice, that the religious houses may not be condemned on the unsupported word of such miserable men as Layton, Legh, Ap Rice, and London.

The first volume of the present work clears the ground for the history of the suppression of the monasteries, which will be narrated in the second. The story of the dissolution is full of pathetic incidents, which render it a fascinating subject to inspire a historian who is so well qualified for his task as Mr. Gasquet.—*The Guardian*.

* *Hist.*, ii., p. 214. Dean Hook adopts Fuller's estimate of these tools of Crumwell.

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BY
BERNARDINE À PICONIO

TRANSLATED AND EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN BY

A. H. PRICHARD, B.A.

MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS,
THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS,
EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, AND COLOSSIANS.

JOHN HODGES,
HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

1890.

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PREFACE.

THE First Epistle to the Corinthians was written shortly before, and the Second was written shortly after, the tumultuous attack made upon Saint Paul at Ephesus, in the year 57, with which the name of Demetrius is associated, and which is related in the 19th Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. This outbreak was probably instigated by the Jews, and it occasioned the Apostle's departure from Ephesus, where he was exposed to imminent peril of his life. This occurrence caused him a degree of anguish and annoyance which he can hardly find words to express, as appears from the opening of this Epistle; and it occasioned a change in his plans, for instead of crossing the sea to Corinth and proceeding thence to Macedonia, as he had intended (i., 16), he went at once into Macedonia by way of Troas. Arriving in Macedonia, he found himself plunged into a laborious course of Apostolic labour which occupied him some months, during which he traversed the province in every direction (Acts xx., 2). Meanwhile, he despatched his friend and fellow-labourer, Saint Titus, to Corinth, to explain the reasons for his non-appearance, according to promise, and ascertain the effect produced by the First Epistle, which had been sent previously by the hands of Timothy, Stephanas, and others; and on the return of Titus he wrote the

extremely beautiful letter which follows. It was despatched from Philippi, the capital of Macedonia, towards the close of the year 57, by the hands of Saint Titus and Saint Luke. The effect of the former one, when received at Corinth, had been marked and extraordinary. The Corinthian Christians, as a body, submitted at once, not only readily, but eagerly, to all the Apostle's exhortations and requirements; so much so, that in one instance he has even to rebuke their over-zeal; while on the other hand his opponents, the teachers against whom he inveighed, were driven to open war. They now threw off all disguise, and openly arrayed themselves against the authority of the Apostle, whom they assailed with a flood of calumny and invective. He was inconstant and uncertain, always altering his plans, faithless to his promises, infamous in his character, hypocritical in his professions of piety; the doctrine he taught was his own invention, altered continually to suit his own will and pleasure; he had intruded himself into the Apostolic office without any call from Christ. To defend himself from these charges, assert the genuineness of his mission, the conformity of his doctrine with that of the other Apostles, and its uniform consistency with itself, is the object of this second Epistle. In support of his argument he is compelled to introduce the mention of visions and revelations from heaven with which he had been favoured, and to which, under other circumstances, he would probably never have alluded; and he goes so far as to threaten his opponents, since they sought a proof of his ministry, with a trial of his miraculous powers similar to that which Saint Peter exercised in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. But this is only under extreme provocation. As a rule, the tone of the Epistle is gentie, humble, and apologetic, to a degree which is very pathetic and

touching; and it is more personal than the former, owing to the influence upon his mind of the extremely violent sorrow and anguish which the outbreak at Ephesus had caused him, and which produced a feeling of depression under which, though some months had elapsed, he still laboured. His letter was an *avant courier* of his own presence, for he announces his intention of coming to Corinth, and recurring to the subject of the collection for the Christians in Judea, requests that the money may be ready for him to take with him when he went to the East. It appears, from the opening words of Acts xx., that he carried out this intention, for he came to Greece, remained there three months, and then proceeded, according to arrangement, to Jerusalem. Baronius thinks this Epistle was written at Nicopolis, in Asia Minor, in the year 58, but this is not the commonly-received opinion. It is addressed generally to all the Christians in Greece, or, as it was then called, the province of Achaia, of which Corinth was the political capital.



THE SECOND EPISTLE OF

CHAPTER I.

1. PAUL, apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and our brother Timothy, to the Church of God, which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia.

2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this Chapter the Apostle, after saluting the Christians of Achaia, points out that suffering brings with it consolation, because it makes us partakers of the passion of Christ; describes the sorrow which had been occasioned him by the recent occurrences at Ephesus; and excuses himself for not having visited the Corinthians, as he had intended, on his way to Macedonia.

1. *Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God.*—The will of God is the origin of the Apostolic office, and every other office in the Church; and it is to the will of God that Saint Paul ascribes his appointment to this office, and the obligation he was under of discharging its functions, not to any merit or assumption of his own.

Our brother Timothy.—Saint Timothy was well known to the Corinthian Christians, having been the bearer of the first Epistle, and they appreciated the high gifts of the Spirit of God, with which he was endowed (see 1 Cor. xvi., 10, 11). He had now rejoined Saint Paul, and the Apostle here associates him with himself as the writer of this Epistle.

2. *Grace to you and peace.*—Grace, the source of all good; and peace, with God for eternity. These terms are the *summum bonum* in which all good is included.

This formula is used also in the Epistle to the Romans and the first to the Corinthians, and is in effect a benediction in the name of the Most Holy Trinity.

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation.

4. Who consoles us in all our trouble, that we also may be able to console those who are in every affliction, through the exhortation with which we ourselves are exhorted by God.

5. Because, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also through Christ abounds our consolation.

6. And if we are troubled it is for your exhortation and salvation; if we are consoled it is for your consolation; if we are exhorted it is for your exhortation and salvation, which work the endurance of the same sufferings which we also suffer.

7. That our hope of you may be quite confident, since we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so you will be also of the consolation.

3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*—There is no verb in this sentence either in the Vulgate or the Greek, but according to analogy it should be rendered as in the imperative, *blessed be*, not *blessed is*; as in the Lord's Prayer, *hallowed be Thy Name*. To bless God is to acknowledge that He is essentially blessed, and the source of all blessing to His creatures. *The Father of mercies*, because mercy proceeds from Himself. God is nowhere called the Father of justice or of vengeance, because these are caused by our sins; but *mercy* is from God. He is also the *Father of mercies*, because Christ implored mercy for us on the cross—*Father, forgive them*.

4. *Who consoles us.*—The Greek word παρακαλέω which, or its derivatives, occurs no less than twelve times in this

passage, has the double meaning of *console* and *exhort*. In the Vulgate it is rendered five times by *exhort*, or *exhortation*, and seven times by *console*, or *consolation*. The meaning is rendered clearer by expressing it throughout by *consolation*, with the added idea that consolation necessarily conveys *exhortation* to continue patient under continued suffering. God consoles us in every trouble, as He has consoled me now by the report I have received of your good disposition and readiness to repent. And this consolation He is wont to send, not for our sakes only, who receive it, but especially to enable us to administer to others, whatever the nature of their trouble may be, the same consolation and the same exhortation and encouragement to perseverance which we receive from Him. And the principal source of consolation which God sends is this, that we are by suffering made to partake the sufferings of Christ, which, as if they had been too much for Him, overflow upon and extend *also* to us. But so also does the consolation which Christ experienced in the knowledge that He was doing His Father's will. And the reason God sends us trouble is in order that we may be enabled to impart this consolation and encouragement to others who are in affliction. In time of trouble, therefore, I have the satisfaction of feeling that it is sent me to enable me to console and encourage you; in time of consolation, that consolation is enhanced by the same reflection, because my example encourages you to endure bravely troubles and annoyances similar to those which I also am called on to bear. And witnessing your suffering, I have an unquestioning and confident hope that you will partake also the consolation which I am permitted to feel.

There is some discrepancy in the reading of verses 6 and 7 in the Vulgate and in the Greek. Saint Chrysostom reads the passage thus: If we are in trouble, it is for

your consolation and salvation, wrought by the endurance of the same sufferings we also endure; and if we are consoled, it is still for your consolation and salvation, because we know that as you are partakers of the suffering, so you will be also of the consolation.

The expression in verse 6, that consolation *works*, operates, or produces endurance of suffering, is, in the Greek, acts by means of, or takes the form of, patience and resignation. For the grace of endurance of suffering patiently for God's sake comes directly or indirectly from Him.

8. For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, regarding our tribulation which happened in Asia; that beyond measure we were oppressed, beyond strength, so that we were weary even of life.

9. But we had of ourselves, and in ourselves, the answer of death, that we trust not in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead.

10. Who delivered us, and delivers, from perils so great, in Whom we hope that He will yet deliver.

11. You also aiding in prayer for us; that from the persons of many, for the gift which is in us, thanks may be given for us by many.

It is a mark of charity and affection to impart our sorrows and sufferings to our friends, even when they are passed and over, as showing that we feel sure of their sympathy. The grief Saint Paul had suffered at Ephesus had been almost more than his strength could endure; *we were weary even of life*. As Job says (x. 1.), *my soul is weary of my life*. But the Greek has *we despaired of life*, or believed death to be inevitable, and this is how Erasmus understands it. The Syriac version reads it, *our life was nearly gone*.

9. *The answer of death.* In the Greek, *the sentence of death.* We considered ourselves as good as dead, and only awaited the execution of the sentence. It would appear that some of Saint Paul's companions were in equal peril with himself, and he includes them by the use of the plural number. The remainder of the verse may either mean : We abandoned all confidence in our power of resistance in self-defence, and looked forward only to God's promise of resurrection from the dead. Or, more probable : Being delivered from such extreme peril, we learn to trust fully in God, Who saved us in a way as wonderful as if He had actually raised us from the dead. This we hope He will continue to do, by the aid of your prayers, so that continual thanksgiving may be offered to God by multitudes, for the continual deliverance which the prayers of multitudes have been the means of obtaining ; or, as Saint Chrysostom says, have obtained, for the benefit and salvation of multitudes. Saint Paul does not ascribe his deliverance to God's care solely for him, but for the advantage obtained by his Apostolic Ministry for the human race.

12. For our glory is this, the testimony of our consciences that in simplicity of heart and sincerity of God, and not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God, we have conversed in this world, and more abundantly to you.

13. For we write no other things to you, than what you have read and known, and I hope will know unto the end.

14. As also you have known us in part, that we are your glory, as also you are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle here enters on his defence against the charges brought against him by his opponents at Corinth.

My boasting is only this, the conviction of my own conscience that I have always lived and acted in good faith and simple and straightforward honesty, as in the sight of God, not in any parade and affection of worldly wisdom, and the profession of philosophy, like your self-appointed teachers at Corinth, but in the wisdom conferred upon me by the Holy Spirit, and the miracles which the grace of God has enabled me to effect (Theophylact). And this I have done in all parts of the world which I have visited, and most conspicuously of all among you. And if this seems like boasting, I call yourselves as witnesses of what I say, for what I have asserted is only what you are already acquainted with, from what you saw of me, and the contents of my former letter; and when I return among you, you will find further confirmation of what I declare and protest. And in effect you have and do candidly acknowledge it to be true, not indeed all of you, but *in part*, and have confessed that my presence and action in Corinth, and my having made known to you the faith of Christ, is an honour and distinction to your city, and the community of believers in Greece; as you will in turn be my glory and rejoicing at the great day of the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. "He has associated the Corinthian Christians with him in his affliction," says Saint Chrysostom, "and so associates them with him in his triumph and hope."

15. And in this confidence I wished to come to you first, that you might have a second grace.

16. And by you to pass into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you be conducted to Jerusalem.

17. But when I so wished, was I guilty of levity? or what I think, do I think according to the flesh, that with me there should be *is* and *not*?

Having this confidence in your regard and affection for me, I fully intended, when I wrote the former Epistle, to come to Corinth on my way to Macedonia, and again on my return from Macedonia, in the course of my journey to Jerusalem, to give you the advantage of my presence twice. Some read, for the word *grace*, χάρις, joy or satisfaction. And I hoped to pass the winter in Greece (1 Eph. xvi. 6); (this intention the Apostle afterwards carried out) and that you would send a deputation of some of your number to conduct me to Jerusalem. Do you suppose that in forming and announcing this intention, and afterwards altering it, I acted from mere caprice or levity? That I was insincere when I made the promise, and that anything but urgent necessity compelled me to break it? That I form my plans simply by my own inclination, or on worldly or selfish considerations; that I am changeable and inconstant, saying one thing one day and another the next? There is no doubt this charge was brought against Saint Paul by his opponents at Corinth, and probably in the very terms he used. They said his promises were, as the Greek expresses it, *ναὶ ναὶ, οὐ, οὐ*. But what was a more serious matter, they brought the same charge against the doctrine he taught; and to this he proceeds to refer in the next verses.

Saint Chrysostom: My promise was my own; my preaching is God's.

Saint Thomas: What I intended, is of Paul; what I preached, of the Apostle.

Saint Anselm: God speaks by my mouth; and God is true.

18. But God is faithful; because our word which was among you, there is not in it *is* and *not*.

19. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was by us proclaimed among you, by me and Sylvanus and Timothy, was not *is* and *not*, but in Him was *is*.

20. For as many promises as are of God, are in Him *is* ; and, therefore, in Him is Amen to God, unto our glory.

21. And He who confirms us with you in Christ, and who has anointed us, is God.

22. Who also sealed us, and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.

23. And I call God a witness on my soul ; that sparing you, I came not again to Corinth.

24. Not that we dominate your faith ; but we are helpers of your joy ; for you stand in faith.

Whatever may be said of me, God is faithful to His promises ; and the Gospel which I preached in His name is not subject to change, to be withdrawn or explained away. Jesus Christ, Who was proclaimed among you by me and Silas and Timothy, is Himself the Unchangeable Truth, the Completion and Fulfilment of all the promises of God made in the olden times, and His word is the assurance of the reality of that eternal glory which He has promised to us, which is what we mean when we sing *Amen* in the praises of God. God has Himself given among you the proof of the reality of our Apostolic ministry, as preachers of Christ, and ratified it by the seal of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, an unanswerable demonstration of the presence of His Divine power ; to which the presence and influence of the same Spirit in your hearts testifies and answers. In these words the Apostle calls all the three Persons of the blessed Trinity to witness, in the cognisance and consciousness of the Corinthian Christians, to the reality of his Apostolic authority.

Silas, or Sylvanus, is spoken of in terms of great respect and honour in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. He subsequently accompanied Saint Paul in his second Apostolical journey, in the course of which they

visited Corinth, and his name is frequently mentioned in the detailed narrative given in the Acts.

23. Having made this protest on behalf of the eternal verity and unchangeableness of the promises of God, the Apostle proceeds at last to explain the real reason why he had not visited Corinth on his way to Macedonia, which he does with an oath of great solemnity, calling God to witness on his soul. He avoided coming to Corinth at that time, lest he should be called upon to exercise his Apostolic authority with severity, and for punishment. He evidently preferred to try first the effect of the Epistle he sent by the hands of Timothy. Not, he adds, that we take advantage of your unshaken fidelity and allegiance to God, to exercise dominion and power over you. We infinitely prefer to find you rejoicing in faith and hope, undisturbed by doubts and controversies, and to share your joy. *In faith you stand*; your fidelity and perseverance in faith I fully acknowledge, and, therefore, would rather bring you joy than sorrow.

The Greek text reads in verse 20: Whatever are the promises of God, in him they are *yes*, and in him *amen*, to God's glory through us. God's promises in the Old Testament are completed in Christ; and consequently God's glory is fulfilled in us. The Syriac: All the promises of God are *yes* through Christ (that is, are fulfilled in Christ); therefore, through him we give amen to the glory of God:—*i.e.*, we sing amen in the Churches to God's glory. The sense of the reading of the Vulgate is: All God's promises of former days have been fulfilled in Christ, for which reason we say amen to God; that is we trust and believe in God, and this faith is the ground or cause of our eternal glory and salvation. For faith is the root from which eternal glory springs.

23. *I came not again to Corinth.* I would not return to Corinth till I had seen the effect of the former Epistle, as he explains in the next chapter.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Man's promises are written in the shifting sand. Even an Apostle cannot always keep his word. Man proposes, but God disposes; the promise may be sincerely given; but who shall say to what conditions it may be subject? What altered circumstances, what unforeseen difficulties, may be in the way of its fulfilment? But God's promises are always to be depended on, and His words are always true. True, in a sense in which no other words are true. Dust thou art: to dust thou shalt return. In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die. A hundred thousand millions of human beings have experienced the truth of this prediction since the words were spoken; for their bodies have mingled with the earth from which they sprang, and their souls passed into the hands of God. If His denunciations are true, so are His promises. You know in all your heart that of all God promised to do for you, not one word has failed (Jos. xxiii. 14). All God's promises of old have been fulfilled in Christ; so shall those be which Christ spoke. I am with you always, to the end of the world. On this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. Science and philosophy, or what pass for such, declare that death is an eternal sleep, and deride the hope of resurrection. God says the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. The mortal and corrupt shall be invested with incorruption and immortality. And the promise of the Gospel of Christ remains unshaken and unaltered to the end of time: that all who live and die, humbly and sincerely, in the communion of the holy Catholic Church—whatever they may in justice suffer for their sins—shall find eternal salvation, and entrance into bliss and glory, on that day. *Aperuisti credentibus regna cælorum.* Those who put their trust in man must, some day, or in some manner, find their confidence deceived. God, and God only, keeps His word.

CHAPTER II.

1. AND I settled this with myself, that I would not come again to you in sadness.

2. For if I make you sad—and who is there to make me glad but he who by me is saddened?

3. And I wrote this very thing to you, that I might not, when I came, have sadness upon sadness from those for whom I ought to rejoice: trusting in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

4. For in great tribulation and oppression of heart I wrote to you with many tears: not that you might be saddened, but that you might know what charity I have more abundantly towards you.

In this Chapter the Apostle explains that he would not come to Corinth until he had seen the effect of his former Epistle, the severity of which he acknowledges and excuses. He directs that the penitent offenders should be restored to the communion of the Church; and passing from this subject, protests that he had preached the word of God in all sincerity.

1. I decided not to come to Corinth for a time, for if I did, I should have *come in sadness*, and occasioned sadness to you, on account of the circumstances referred to in the former Epistle. There is none to make me glad but you, the principal object of my care and affection; and those who are in sorrow do not gladden those who have occasioned that sorrow. I wrote to induce you to repent, that I might have joy and not sorrow; and I had a right to joy, not sorrow, among you when I came. I knew you well enough to feel sure that the joy I should experience in your repentance would be a source of pleasure and

satisfaction to all of you. I wrote to you, as Saint Chrysostom says, not only in tribulation and with tears, but *with great tribulation and oppression of heart*, and *many tears*, and as if choked and strangled with grief. He implies that he felt, on that occasion, greater sorrow than they did. Not for any satisfaction I felt in occasioning grief to you, but to let you know the depth of my affection for you. With how great earnestness I sought your salvation, your rescue from sin, your restoration to Christ, says Saint Anselm. And Saint Chrysostom : He says, not *charity* only, but *charity more abundant*, as showing that he had greater regard for them than for any others, and considered them his principal and pattern converts. If there were angry expressions in his first Epistle, as when he says : *Do you want me to come with a rod* (1. Cor. iv. 21) ; these very expressions sprang from the depth of his love and grief. The same Father compares Saint Paul to a father healing the sores of a son, by cutting or cauterising, and enduring in doing so a double sorrow, both because his son requires such treatment, and because he is compelled to inflict it upon one who is dear to him, and is weak and suffering ; both feelings spring from his affection. This should be the feeling of every prelate who is called upon to put in execution the censures of the Church.

The repetition in verse 3, *sadness upon sadness*, is not in the Greek text, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, or Ethiopic versions. Ambrose also has not these words either in his text or explanation. Erasmus thinks they were introduced by mistake from Phil. ii. 27. But, according to Father Amelotte, they are found in many copies, which he collates.

A wise son makes his father glad (Prov. x. 1). The joy of the Apostle at the repentance of the Corinthian Christians was in proportion to the depth of anguish which their errors had occasioned him.

5. But if any has occasioned sorrow, he has not occasioned it to me ; but, in part, that I may not burden you all.

6. Sufficient to him who is such is this rebuke, administered by many.

7. So that on the contrary you should rather give and console, lest haply by more abundant sadness he that is such be swallowed up.

8. Wherefore I entreat you to confirm your charity towards him.

9. For on that account also I wrote, to make trial of you, whether in all things you are obedient.

10. And to whom you have given anything, I also ; for I also have given, whatever I have given, on your account, in the person of Christ.

11. That we may not be circumvented by Satan : for we are not ignorant of his thoughts.

These verses refer to the case of the person censured in chapter v. of the former Epistle. The Apostle does not name him, nor his crime ; and says, *if any*, as if he had half forgotten the circumstance, or was not certain of it. This man was the principal occasion of sorrow, but he has not occasioned this sorrow only to me, but to you also—at least, in some degree, *in part* ; or as the Syriac reads, *to nearly all of you*. For I do not lay the blame upon you all. He had apparently done so in verse 2 of the first Epistle : *you are inflated, and have not rather mourned* ; words which he seeks now to soften and limit in their application. Saint Chrysostom, however, understands the last clause differently. He says, *in part*, not meaning that you suffered less than I did, but that I may not press too heavily upon the guilty person in saying that he grieved and offended you all ; and that you may deal with him indulgently.

6. The criminal had been publicly censured and

excommunicated by the Church of Corinth, in compliance with the Apostle's command in the first Epistle ; and the evidence of his repentance being very public and sincere, Saint Paul considers the penalty sufficient. This is the earliest instance of an Apostolic indulgence.

7. So that you ought now rather to pardon him ; remit the sentence pronounced against him ; restore him to communion ; and console him for the grief he has suffered, lest the excess of his grief should induce him to cast himself into the gulf of despair, and deny his faith. Or, as Ambrose says, lest finding himself for too long a time shunned by everyone, he turn his mind to the pleasures of the world, as having no longer any part in God. Or, by further sin, plunge deeper into the pit of destruction.

8. Therefore, to prevent such a catastrophe, I entreat you that he may be publicly absolved, as penitent, by the same judges by whom the sentence of excommunication was pronounced. The Apostle here takes, as Saint Chrysostom observes, the place, not of a judge, but of the prisoner's advocate, pleading before the tribunal.

9. I write this Epistle, Saint Chrysostom says, to test your obedience in all things, in the restoration of the penitent, as in his expulsion. Or else (for the Greek aorist will bear either meaning) I wrote the former one principally to test your obedience, and being satisfied as to this, have no reason to be too severe upon the guilty party, whose restoration I now request.

10. For I also am present with you in spirit, as when you pronounced this sentence (1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5), and confirm and ratify your judgment by the Apostolic authority I exercise, and whom you forgive, I forgive. But the sentence of absolution I now pronounce is spoken for you, and in your name, and should be registered and confirmed by you ; and is spoken in the name and person of Christ, Who said, Whose sins you forgive, they are

forgiven (John xx. 23). In Christ's name Saint Paul had delivered this man to Satan.

11. Lest Satan take advantage of undue severity, and so impel the sinner to the abandonment of his fate, or give ground to a heretical construction, as if the Church refused absolution to penitents. Saint Thomas says :—
“The devil deceives, by drawing some into sin, and others into too great severity against sin ; and if he cannot gain souls by sin, endeavours at least to complete and ensure the ruin of those he has gained by driving them to despair by means of the too austere severity of the prelates of the Church, if they do not in judgment exercise mercy and discretion.” Thus either way he seeks to entangle the souls of men in his net.

12. But when I came to Troas on account of the Gospel of Christ, and a door was opened to me in the Lord,

13. I had not rest to my spirit, because I did not find Titus, my brother ; but bidding them adieu, I set out for Macedonia.

14. But thanks to God, Who always makes us triumph in Christ Jesus, and makes manifest the odour of the knowledge of Himself through us in every place :

15. Because we are a good odour of Christ to God, in those who are saved, and in those who perish.

16. To some indeed the odour of death to death : but to others the odour of life to life. And to this, who is so fit ?

17. For we are not like very many, adulterating the word of God ; but of sincerity, but as of God, before God, in Christ we speak.

12. Leaving Ephesus, I went to Troas to preach the Gospel of Christ, for which I found opportunity, and good prospect of doing it in security and without interruption.

Here I expected to be joined by Titus (who had been sent to Corinth from Ephesus, to report to the Apostle the condition of affairs in Greece), and not finding him, my anxiety on your account deprived me of tranquillity and rest. I quitted Troas accordingly (doubtless leaving some in his place to take advantage of the favourable circumstances just referred to) and went into Macedonia. Troas was a town on the sea coast of Asia, not far from the site of ancient Troy. In Macedonia the Apostle seems to have encountered much trouble and difficulty, of which, however, he gives no detailed account, nor is there any in the Acts of the Apostles (xx. 2), possibly because Saint Luke was absent, being employed to convey this letter to Corinth. Nevertheless, the travels of Saint Paul in Macedonia, which he traversed in every part, were most encouraging in their result, on the whole, as appears from the following verses :—

14. Thanks to God, Who everywhere not only gives us victory, but open triumph and display of that victory : and in every place makes manifest the sweet odour of the knowledge of His mercy in Christ. The more spices are bruised, the stronger and sweeter is their fragrance.

The passion of martyrs is the triumph of the martyrs, the triumph of God, and the triumph of Christ. The triumph of the martyrs, because it displays them openly as victorious over the world and the devil. The triumph of God, because thereby the knowledge of Him is spread, like the sweet odour of spices or of incense. The triumph of Christ, because His Gospel is spread, His faith conquers unbelief, His truth is victorious over error.

15. *We are a sweet odour of Christ to God.* By our good name, by our divinely taught words, by our Christian example, by our unmerited sufferings. To some, indeed, this odour is deadly occasionally ; not in itself, for in itself it is life, and gives life, not by our fault, but by theirs.

Some may *love darkness rather than light*. The scent of ointment fattens the dove, and kills the beetle, *Æcumenius*. Vineyards in flower refresh men and kill serpents (Saint Thomas). The sunshine refreshes strong eyes, gives pain to weak ones. Fire purifies gold, but burns up chaff and stubble. And *who is so fit for these things*, as the Apostles of Christ? This is the reading of the Vulgate, *quis tam idoneus*? It is, however, conjectured that it was originally written *quisnam*: who is sufficient? which is the meaning of the Greek. All is to be attributed to the grace of Christ; we can assume nothing to ourselves (Saint Chrysostom).

17. *We are not as many*. Here the Apostle resumes his defence of his doctrine, which occupies him to the end of Chapter VII. There are many who dilute or adulterate the word of God and make a trade of it, for the word will bear either meaning—mixing it with doctrine of their own invention, or derived from alien sources, as wine-sellers are wont to dilute wine with water, thus selling for profit what they ought to give for nothing (Saint Chrysostom). What we teach we teach pure, unmixed with error—truth as it comes from God, uttered as in His presence; and *in Christ*, not in the subtleties of philosophy. Or, in the person of Christ, and in His name, not our own.

A preacher is a trader, not an apostle, who mixes falsehood with the true; who speaks of God as absent; who trusts in himself and not in Christ.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Jesus Christ has consecrated this world to God and made it His altar of sacrifice. All the pleasure of God the Father is in God the Word, in whom He sees the perfect likeness and reflection of His own infinite perfection and loveliness. Behold, the odour of my son is as the odour of a

field of plenty, which the Lord hath blessed (Gen. xxvii. 27). And in this plenitude of perfection, and in this only, God is *well pleased*. And as the earth revolves, from every country, every clime, every continent and island, there arises before the throne of God the incense of the love of Christ. The Lord smelled an odour of sweetness, and said, I will no more curse the earth for man (Gen. viii. 21), when the smoke of the incense arose from beside the sacrifice of the second father of our race. Earth becomes the altar of incense beside which the Archangel stands, offering the prayers of all the Saints to God. The holy sacrifice of the Mass, the prayer of devotion, the consecration of man's will to the sacred will of God, the incense of contrition, mortification, chastity, suffering, love to God and man, all inspired and all consecrated by the grace of Christ, continually rise before Him. But for this, what is there in this world to attract the love of God? But for this, would He have suffered the race of man to continue for so many generations? The world does not realise that it owes its continued existence to the presence of Christ in the Catholic Church, which is what, and what alone, reconciles the Almighty to our fallen and sinful race. Not only from churches, convents, hospitals, all places where Christ is adored or where men suffer for Him, or with Him, but from every Christian heart in which He dwells by His Spirit, by faith, contrition, charity, the sweet odour of Christ rises like the cloud of incense before the throne of God the Father, and draws down His blessing upon a lost and ruined world.



CHAPTER III.

1. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or do we need (as some do) letters of commendation to you, or from you?

2. You are our Epistle, written in our hearts, which is by all men known and read:

3. Manifestly shown that you are the Epistle of Christ, ministered by us, and written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on tables of flesh of the heart.

In this chapter the Apostle complains that after all that has passed he should be put upon his defence, and required to give over again the proofs of his Apostolic ministry and of the glorious and heavenly character of the message with which he was entrusted.

1. Having in the concluding verse of the last chapter protested his sincerity, and that he spoke in the name of Christ, he now asks whether he is to introduce himself over again to the Corinthian Christians, whom he had converted to the faith, and come to them with a letter of introduction. *As some do.* It appears to have been the custom of the teachers of heresy to obtain testimonials or certificates, with which they went round from city to city to spread their views by lecturing. There appears to be some irony in the Apostle's question. But it was also probably made a charge against Saint Paul that in his former Epistle he had taken occasion to speak much of the dignity of his Apostolic mission, especially in the four earlier chapters; to which he here replies that it is all the more unnecessary for him to do so again.

2. *You are our Epistle.* There is here a double metaphor. You are the Epistle on which I have inscribed, visibly and conspicuously, the word of God and the truth of the Christian faith; Corinth being one of the most populous and celebrated cities of the Roman Empire, and its conversion a fact of notoriety, seen and read by all men. You are inscribed upon the affections of my heart, like the names of the tribes of Israel upon the plate worn upon the shoulders of the high priest, and I carry you always in my recollection. This should be the double effort of the prelate or pastor, to write God's law in the hearts of His people, and then to carry them always in His own.

3. More than this. You are an Epistle from Christ, conveyed by my hands, manifest and evident to all the world, by your faith and the miracles which accompany it; in which God's word is inscribed, not with ink, as in ordinary letters, but with the Spirit of God, Who lives and operates visibly in you. Not inscribed, as the law was inscribed by Moses, upon tables of stone, but upon the tables of your hearts, which are *tables of flesh*. *Flesh* is not here opposed to spirit, as in most cases, but to that which is hard and insensible, like stone; and signifies impressible, docile, obedient. The heart is here regarded as the organ of sensibility or feeling, and the source of volition or energy, and the love of Christ engraved upon the heart prompts to readiness and obedience to all His commands. The result is patent and evident to all the world, for your faith and charity manifestly show that you belong to Christ.

“As spirit differs from ink, and heart from stone, so is the New Covenant better than the Law,” says Theophylact.

4. And such trust we have through Christ to God.

5. Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as from ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God;

6. Who also has made us fit ministers of the New Testament; not in the letter, but in the Spirit: for the letter kills, but the Spirit brings to life.

4. I speak confidently, and claim much; but I have a right to this confidence, because my trust is in God through Christ. Christ is to us a cause of glorying in God, there is no cause of glorying in ourselves (Theophylact).

5. For I do not for a moment suppose or imply that there exists in me any power or strength to conceive and plan, much less execute and carry out, anything that can forward the salvation of the souls of men. Our sufficiency, or ability to do this, is from God, and God alone. The Syriac has: *Our strength is from God, through the merits of Christ.*

To think anything. It is worth noting, says Saint Anselm, by those who consider that faith originates with ourselves, and is supplemented by the Grace of God, that *to think* necessarily comes before *to believe*. No one *believes* that which he has not first *thought* credible. But if we are not sufficient, or naturally able, to *think* any good, much less are we naturally able to *believe* it; our sufficiency both to *think* and to *believe* is therefore equally from God. By thought we believe, by thought we speak, by thought we act, all that we do.

6. God has chosen and fitted us as the ministers of the New Covenant; not *in the letter*, by giving us a law engraved on tables of stone, which we are to announce and explain to others; but by endowing us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which gifts we are empowered and enabled to confer upon others in their actual power and potency. For the law alone, without the grace of the Holy Spirit, not in its own nature, but *accidentaliter*, kills the soul, or becomes an occasion of death, first because it prescribes what is to be done, or left undone, but does not

give power to fulfil the command; and sin thus becomes worse by knowledge of the law and transgression of its precepts; and secondly, because it suggests the desire of acting in contravention of those precepts. *Nitimur in vetitum.* But the *Spirit makes alive*, or vivifies, is a fountain of life within us. He diffuses charity in our hearts, and charity is the life of the soul.

The law is spiritual, says Saint Chrysostom, but did not give the Spirit. Moses brought letters, not the Spirit. The commission of our faith is to confer the Spirit.

The law is good, in so far as it enjoins what is good; grace is good, because it confers what is good.—St. Aug. (*Contr. advers. legis*, II. 1.)

This comparison of the Gospel of Christ with the law is intended, as the Apostle explains farther on, to show the great dignity and splendour of the salvation offered to man by Christ.

The contrast between the *letter* and the *Spirit* in verse 6 has led some readers hastily to infer that by the *letter* the Apostle means the literal sense of the writings of the Old Testament, in their ordinary grammatical meaning; and by the *Spirit*, a figurative interpretation, known by tradition or by prophecy, but not apparent on the surface. That this cannot be his meaning will be evident to anyone who has carefully read the books of the Old Testament, of which the plain, literal meaning, as it stands, points so clearly to Christ, that the Jews could not possibly be misled by it. What was wanting was not any clearness in the oracle, but the Grace of God to dispose them to accept Christ, and prefer the promises of a better life to the riches or glory of this mortal state. Otherwise they would not have incurred such guilt in rejecting Him. It was the clearness of the *letter* which occasioned their fall, for in rejecting Christ they consciously rejected also the teaching of their own lawgiver and prophets.

7. But if the ministration of death, formed in letters on stones, was in glory: so that the sons of Israel could not look upon the face of Moses, on account of the glory of his countenance, which is being abolished:

8. How much more shall not the ministration of the Spirit be in glory?

9. For if the ministration of damnation is glory: much more abounds the ministry of justice in glory.

10. For it is not even glorified, that which shone, in this respect, on account of a glory that excels it.

11. For if what is being abolished is through glory: much more that which remains is in glory.

Even the law of Moses, the ministry of death, engraved in letters on the tables of the law, was invested with such splendour that the people of Israel could not look upon the face of Moses when he came down from the mountain (Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30). How much greater will be the glory that will attend the ministry of the Spirit who gives life, at the resurrection of the dead? That the Apostle here refers to the future glory of the resurrection appears from the reference to this *hope* in verse 12, and is the opinion of Saint Chrysostom and others. And in the glory of heaven the Apostles of Christ will doubtless have a place of pre-eminence. If the *ministry of damnation* is glorious, much more so is that which confers remission of sin and the gifts of the Spirit of God. Compared with this (which is the meaning of *ex parte*, in this respect), the glory of the old law fades into insignificance, and is no glory at all. The transitory splendour which irradiated the countenance of Moses was a figure of the transitory nature of the law he ministered. Much greater, as it is more enduring, will be the glory of that salvation in Christ which shall stand for ever.

It is probable that the heretical teachers whom the

Apostle is opposing sought to depreciate the Gospel of Christ by putting it on a level with the law of Moses, and required the perpetuation of many of the customs of the old law. Here he stigmatises them as *ministers of the letter, ministers of death, ministers of damnation.*

12. Having therefore such hope, we use much boldness:

13. And not as Moses put a veil upon his face, that the sons of Israel might not look upon his face, which veil is abolished.

14. But their senses are blunted; even to this day the same veil in the reading of the Old Testament remains not removed (since in Christ it is done away):

15. But even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil is placed upon their heart.

16. But when he shall have turned to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

Animated by the hope of immense and eternal glory through Christ, we, His Apostles, speak boldly and fearlessly. Nothing concealing, nothing dissimulating, nothing grudging, we speak in all openness and clearness.—Saint Chrysostom. Moses put a veil on his face to show that the time was not come for full revelation of the truth; we are bold to speak without veil.—Saint Thomas. *Which is abolished*; that is, the veil, as Saint Thomas thinks. The veil is the obscurity of types and figures, abolished in Christ. Others consider that what is said to be abolished is the glory of the face of Moses, which soon passed away. The Greek text, which is followed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, and by Saint Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Theodoret, reads: *The sons of Israel could not look to the end of that which was being done away.* They could not see that the law was to be abolished; neither could they see that it was to be

abolished in Christ. Neither do the Jews perceive now either of these truths, but in reading the writings of the Old Testament their eyes are blinded, and a veil seems wrapped round their hearts. But when their nation, or, as the Syriac says, any one of them, shall turn to the Lord, the veil will be removed, and they will see clearly.

Moses put a veil on his face, signifying the blindness of those who do not believe; when he returned to God he removed the veil (Exod. xxxiv. 34) to signify the clear vision of God, by faith now, face to face hereafter, of those who believe in Christ.

17. And the Spirit is Lord: and where there is the Spirit of the Lord, there is freedom.

18. But we all, with face unveiled, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same likeness, from clearness to clearness, as if by the Spirit of the Lord.

17. *The Spirit is Lord.* The Spirit of God is sovereign and free, breathing where He will, bestowing His gifts according to His own good pleasure and infinite wisdom. He does not deal with us, as with Moses, under a veil and in types and shadows, but openly and plainly. And where there is the presence and action of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord, there is *freedom*; freedom of intellect and understanding to see God's truth, freedom of will to believe in and embrace it. For if freedom of will was a natural gift given to man at his Creation, it was impaired and weakened by his fall, and is restored only by the grace of the Spirit of God.

18. And we all, not Moses only, but all Christians who have received the Holy Spirit, and especially we, the Apostles, who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, *with unveiled face*, that is with, clear intellectual vision, seeing and reflecting in turn (the Greek participle will

bear both meanings, and the Apostle probably passes mentally from one to another) as a mirror reflects the light of the sun, the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, are transformed into His image and likeness, derived from His glory to ours, in accordance with the mysterious and supernatural action of the Holy Spirit, which human wisdom is unequal to comprehend or explain, upon the soul of man; but which is seen in its effects, in the marvellous and heroic virtues of the Saints of God, who in a certain sense and certain measure are a reflection of the glory of Christ and the sanctity of God.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The heart of the Christian is an Epistle written by the hand of Christ. It is the parchment on which is inscribed the sacred and mysterious text. The Holy Spirit of God is the finger of Christ, which traces the words with the ink of His grace, His inspiration, His illumination, His movements and aspirations of piety; and the legend inscribed is faith, and hope, and charity. God is the writer; the Christian is only the book; his part is to receive with submission and thankfulness the tracing of God's hand; to obey the movements of His Holy Spirit. For there is a heart of stone, of iron, of adamant, which will take no impression from that gentle hand. Let ours be a heart of flesh, living, sentient, obedient. Let that gentle influence curb and restrain our rebellious will. Let us pray God to destroy within us all unworthy affections, all useless fears, all destructive errors. Then shall we be prepared to receive that which God will write upon our hearts. *My heart is ready, Lord : my heart is ready.* Write therein Thy truth, Thy holy fear, the sincere and perfect love of Thee. And what God writes upon our hearts, angels and men are free to read.

CHAPTER IV.

1. THEREFORE holding the administration, according as we have obtained mercy, we fail not.

2. But we renounce the hidden practices of shame, not walking in craft, nor adulterating the word of God; but in manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every conscience of men in the presence of God.

In this chapter the Apostle protests the integrity and purity of motive of himself and his fellow-labourers, of which the sufferings they endured are a proof, and not of the contrary: and asserts that those who failed to see the truth and beauty of the Gospel, as he taught it, were blinded by Satan.

1. *Therefore*, inasmuch as we are trusted with the ministry of the Gospel of God, through His mercy, as explained above, *we fail not*, are not idle or backward in discharging this office, as Erasmus understands it; we do not shrink or quail before peril and affliction, says Theophylact, a sense which is more in accordance with the language both of the Vulgate and the Greek text. We renounce and execrate all sin and impurity, even that which is hidden and concealed; we do not cheat or deceive; we do not falsify God's word; but place the truth plainly in appeal to the consciences of men, as in the presence of God, who sees the hearts of all men.

The heretical teachers, intruding themselves into the office of teachers of religion, and doing so for gain, shrank from persecution; and it is impossible not to see the intention of the Apostle to reflect upon these men all the charges from which he defends himself and his friends, in this passage.

3. But even if our Gospel is hid, it is hid in those who perish ;

4. In whom the God of this world blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the illumination of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, may not shine upon them.

If it is objected that this Gospel, thus plainly offered to the conscience of mankind, is by many of them rejected, and that this throws doubt upon its truth, I answer that those who do not see it are such as perish voluntarily, because they do not choose to see the light, for the Devil, whom our Lord calls *the prince of this world* (John xiv. 30), has blinded their minds by the darkness of infidelity and vice. It would appear from this that the blindness caused by the influence of Satan upon the souls of men is voluntary blindness, because they will not see. Where there is good will Satan has no power. The result is that the clear light of the Gospel, by which is made manifest the glory of Christ, who is the perfect image of God the Father, light of light begotten, the splendour of his glory (Heb. i. 3), the brightness of the light eternal (Sap. vii. 26), who illuminates every man who comes into the world (John i. 9), cannot shine upon them. Bats cannot see in the sunlight, for they shun the day, and love darkness rather than light. Truth and error are not matters of opinion, and are not on equal grounds. Darkness means deprivation of light. Light is real, darkness negative. The Gospel of Christ is light in itself, and clearly placed before the minds of men ; it is darkness only to the wilfully blind.

5. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord, and us your servants through Jesus.

6. Because God, Who told light to shine from darkness,

Himself shone in our hearts, to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

Having replied to this objection, the Apostle goes on with the comparison between the teachers of truth and the teachers of error. These, he implies, preached themselves, not Jesus Christ; and sought to rule and dominate their converts, not to serve them. We do not seek either our own glory or our own profit, but the glory of Jesus Christ, and your spiritual profit and advantage, your salvation *through Jesus*, and to this we give up all our exertion and all our time. And the reason we do so is, because He Who in the beginning said *Let there be light*, has cast the effulgence of His light in our hearts, which before were dark, not only to illumine us, but *to the illumination* of the world by the knowledge and recognition of the glory of God. And this divine Light has shone upon the world from *the face of Jesus Christ*, Who is the image of the Father's glory. It is the office of the Son to reveal to creation the glory of the Father. *Who sees Me, sees My Father*. The Syriac has *in the person of Jesus Christ*, in us as His legates and representatives; but St. Chrysostom and Theophylact follow the sense of the Vulgate.

God the Father is the source of light. God the Son is light begotten of light; and has illuminated His Apostles and their successors, that they may in turn illuminate the world. For it is the nature of light to shine.

The light of God's truth shone out from the darkness of the law, as light in the beginning flashed from darkness at the word of God, at the appearance of Jesus Christ, the consubstantial image of the Father. Christ is a more perfect image of God than the creature, and the knowledge of God is therefore more perfect through Christ than through the creature.

7. But we have this treasure in vases of clay, that the sublimity may be of the power of God, and not of us.

8. In all things we suffer tribulation, but are not crushed ; we are helpless, but not destitute.

9. We suffer persecution, but are not abandoned : we are dejected, but we do not perish :

10. Always carrying in our body the mortification of Jesus, that also the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies.

11. For always we who live are being delivered up to death for Jesus : that also the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12. Therefore death operates in us, and life in you.

The treasure of this celestial light is enclosed in us fragile vases of clay, that all the excellence and glory of our ministry may be attributed to God's power, and not our own. And to God's power, not ours, it is evidently due. Assailed from all quarters, and in every manner, we are not overwhelmed ; perplexed and anxious, we are never without resource, for God comes to our aid ; continually persecuted, we continually escape ; thrown to the ground, though made of clay, we are not broken ; continually in peril of death, we carry about, wherever we go, a sort of likeness of the passion of Christ, that His glorious life may similarly be shown forth in us at the resurrection. While we live, we are exposed to danger of death for Jesus, and our continual deliverance from it is a sort of image of His resurrection. He has risen, and lives, or He could not so continually and miraculously deliver us from death. And *our mortal flesh*, in which we suffer, shall one day put on immortality like His. Thus the preaching of the Gospel brings us death in the body, and spiritual life to you. The Apostle, in writing these words, clearly foresaw at least the probability of his own martyrdom.

Vases of clay refers not only to the mortality of the Apostles, as children of clay, but most of them were men originally humble, rude, illiterate, destitute of this world's goods, looked down upon and despised. All the more brilliant became the glory and excellence of the Apostle they exercised, in their hands.

13. And having the same spirit of faith, as it is written : I believed, therefore I spoke ; we also believe, wherefore we also speak :

14. Knowing that He who raised up Jesus, will also raise us with Jesus, and place us with you.

15. For all things are on your account : that the grace, abounding through many in giving thanks, may abound to the glory of God.

16. On which account we do not fail ; but though our man, which is without, be corrupted ; yet that which is within is renewed from day to day.

17. For that which is momentary and light of our tribulation in the present, operates in us above measure in sublimity an eternal weight of glory.

18. In us who contemplate not things that are seen, but things that are not seen : for the things that are seen, are temporal : but the things that are not seen, are eternal.

In spite of all these afflictions and persecutions, we continue to speak boldly and plainly. Why ? because we *believe*. We have the same spirit of faith which prompted the prophet of old to say, *I believed, therefore I spoke*. (Ps. cxvi. 10.) The false apostles were silent in time of persecution, because they did not believe. And what we believe is, that as when Jesus had been put to death God raised Him from the dead, so He will also raise us up from death, and place us in His heavenly kingdom *with you*. I say purposely, place us with you, not you with us. For

the whole of our ministry exists and is ordained for your salvation : and the more widely the Gospel is spread, the more fully will the eucharist of thanksgiving be offered to God, for His glory. The firmness and confidence of this faith and hope of the resurrection, arms and steels us against all perils and adversities ; and though that part of our human nature, the body namely, which is outward and visible, and is sensitive to fatigue, blows, hunger, thirst, and cold, may decay and perish, and is sensibly beginning to do so, that which is within, namely the mind and soul, grows stronger every day in faith and hope. Or, is daily renewed and refreshed with new graces, which cause it to grow and flourish in the knowledge and love of God, and become strengthened against the persecutions which may be coming in the future. For our faith assures us that the affliction of the body, which is *light* and *momentary*, is preparing for us an immense and indescribable *weight* of glory, which is *eternal*, and which will exceed, beyond all measure or calculation, all the afflictions of this mortal life. *Above measure in sublimity.* In the Greek, *by excellence to excellence.* Exceedingly exceeding all magnitude, says Theophylact. The Syriac : The trouble and oppression of this mortal life, slight and insignificant as it is, is preparing for us glory infinite in degree, and that shall last for ages of ages. And on this account we disregard, and do not even look at, things that are visible, temporal, and transitory ; but we fix our mental gaze on the things that are invisible and eternal.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

All visible things have come, or will come, to an end. This world, its fame, its ambitions, its pleasures, its empires. There were mighty men of old, *men of renown.* (Gen. vi. 4.) Who were these *men of renown*, what were their names, and what is their *renown* worth now ?

They are forgotten, as if they had never been. Babylon and Troy have passed away. Where is the empire of Alexander? Where is the empire of Cæsar? Whatsoever my eyes desired, I refused them not : and I withheld not my heart from enjoying every pleasure. What trace is left of the pleasures of King Solomon, except this record of his repentance? So will all things visible pass away in their turn. One day the earth itself, and the works which are in it, shall be burned up. (2 Pet. iii. 10.) Care, and anxiety, and regret, and grief, and disappointment, and penury, and bodily pain and sickness, the ill will, hatred, and vengeance of those who hate the truth—all these things are visible and temporal. All will come to an end one day, in the silence of the grave. There is one thing which will never come to an end, and will endure, because it is in its own nature eternal, immortal, indestructible; it is the Throne of Christ, before which His Angels stand, near which His Saints reign with Him in glory. He shall reign for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. (Luc. i. 33). We do not see this glory with our bodily eyes, for the things that are eternal are not seen; not that in their own nature they are incapable of being seen, but because we are not yet worthy to see them. We shall see them with our bodily eyes one day; we see them now by faith. *Benedictum fructum ventris tui nobis post hoc exilium ostende.* Meanwhile let us learn, with the Apostle, to look at things transitory as if we saw them not, and to see the invisible by faith and hope.



CHAPTER V.

I. FOR we know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

In this chapter the Apostle defends himself from the charge of vain glory and undue assertion of his claims, by pointing to the glorious hope of immortality in heaven, which God had commissioned him to announce.

I. The persecution and opposition which Saint Paul and his companions had encountered, at Ephesus, in Macedonia and elsewhere, had been turned into an argument against them, as if it were the result of their own imprudence, fanaticism, and audacity. To this the Apostle has replied, in the last chapter, that these sufferings were entirely insignificant, and he regarded them as nothing, though he felt them severely at the time, in comparison with the hope of resurrection and the future life of glory. And he goes on, *for we know (by faith) that if our earthly mansion or tabernacle—a soldier's tent intended for temporary occupation only—namely, the mortal body, be dissolved or destroyed by death in the service and cause of Christ, we shall receive at the resurrection a dwelling eternal and celestial—the spiritual body.* It is of this that he here speaks, not simply of the glory of the soul. The animal or physical body of this mortal life is created by God, but by human intervention in the course of nature; but the spiritual body of the resurrection will come directly from the hands of God, and will be immortal and incorruptible, subtle, glorious, splendid, fitted to dwell for ever *in the heavens.*

2. For also in this we groan, desiring to be clothed with our habitation, which is from heaven.

3. If, indeed, we shall be found clothed, not naked.

4. For also we, who are in this tabernacle, are weighed down and groan, because we would not be stripped, but clothed; that that which is mortal may be absorbed in life.

5. And He Who is making us for this very thing, is God, Who also gave us the pledge of the Spirit.

2. There is a confusion of metaphor in this verse, but it makes the meaning clearer. *Clothed with our habitation.* For the body is both the dwelling and the vesture of the soul. We groan in this mortal body, longing for the gifts of that body which is glorious and immortal.

3. These gifts we shall receive at once, perhaps without dying at all, or at least dying only for a moment, if the coming of Christ occurs during our mortal life, and finds us *clothed* with our mortal body, not disembodied. The writer evidently regards it as uncertain whether this would be the case or not. There is another interpretation of the words, which is adopted by many ecclesiastical writers: If we are found clothed with grace, charity, and good works, not naked of these graces; if, when leaving the body, we are clothed with Christ, with the form and tradition of our baptism.—Ambrose. The reader must choose between these two interpretations.

4. As long as we remain in this tabernacle of clay, we groan under the weight of our burden, and pant for incorruptibility, not that we desire dissolution and death, from which nature recoils, but we desire the change to immortality, and that what is mortal in us may be absorbed in the glorious transmutation to life eternal.

5. And for this change God created and is preparing us. First, by our creation, *God made man immortal*; secondly,

in our baptism, in which we were made sons of God in Christ, and heirs of immortality. By baptism, says Theophylact, God sanctified us, and destroying sin destroyed also corruption and death; for from sin is corruption. And, the Holy Spirit, given us in baptism, is a pledge of immortality, given us now in part, to be imparted to us wholly and fully at the resurrection to life, and dwell in and animate us for ever.

6. Boldly, therefore, always knowing that while we are in the body we are exiles from the Lord,

7. (For by faith we walk, and not by sight),

8. We dare, and have good will rather to be exiles from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9. And, therefore, we endeavour, whether absent or present, to please Him.

From the glory of the body the Apostle goes on to the glory of the soul. This faith and hope inspires us with courage to face peril, suffering, even death itself; because we know that while we are in this mortal body we are travellers in a foreign land, far from our native home, shut out from the vision of *the Lord*, which is the felicity and happiness for which we were created, and for which we long.

7. *We walk by faith*; we are pursuing our path, pilgrims of faith, whose kindly light guides our footsteps through the gloom. *Thy word is a light to my feet*; but we have not yet arrived at the clear vision of God in Himself, nor see him face to face, nor behold Him in His own essential beauty; we are not yet in the enjoyment of God.

8. We, therefore, boldly face death, and are willing to die, for we know and believe that even when disembodied, and if the resurrection should not immediately follow, our souls will be *present with the Lord*, and enjoy, at least by

near anticipation, the happiness of His presence. The saints of God are always courageous and trustful in death, desiring to be set free from the body, that their souls may be with Christ. The Syriac reads thus : Since we know and are persuaded that as long as we dwell in the body we are pilgrims from our Lord (for by faith we walk and not by sight), we, therefore, confide and choose to be pilgrims from the body, and to be with our Lord. Therefore, pilgrims, or at home—

9. Dead or living, we seek in all things to please Christ, as He pleased His Father. *What pleases Him I always do. He who does My Father's will, is My brother, sister, mother.*

10. For we all must be made manifest before the tribunal of Christ, that everyone may receive what belongs to the body, whether good or evil.

11. Knowing, therefore, the fear of the Lord, we seek to persuade men, and to God we are manifest, and I hope all are also manifest in your consciences.

12. We are not again commending ourselves, but giving you occasion of glorying for us, that you may know what to say to those who glory in face, and not in heart.

10. We, and all mankind, without exception, must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive our due, reward or penalty, good or evil, according to what we have done in the body.

11. Having, therefore, before our eyes the terrors of this dreadful judgment, we seek in all sincerity to persuade men to come to Christ for their salvation, and we endeavour carefully to remove every cause of scandal or aspersion upon the Christian religion. *Offendiculis medemur.* This interpretation is adopted by all the Greek fathers, Saint Chrysostom, Theophylact, Theodoret, Saint Athanasius, and by Estius, Erasmus, and many modern commentators.



Saint Chrysostom infers that to escape God's judgment it is not sufficient to do no evil, but we must avoid all occasion of scandal or offence, even when we are free from guilt. Our sincerity is known to God, and we trust that you, in your conscience, are equally convinced of it.

12. I have been accused of talking arrogantly and proudly in the former Epistle. It will be said I am doing the same thing now. But my object is to suggest to you what to say when next you hear this charge brought against me, as it will in all probability be brought by my opponents, men who are themselves arrogant and proud enough, but whose glory is in their erudition or their wealth, or their dignified or imposing aspect, and the like, and who have no real ground for glorying, in their secret consciousness, in purity of heart.

13. For whether we are out of our mind, to God ; whether we are sober, to you.

14. For the charity of Christ impels us : reckoning this, that if one died for all, all therefore died.

15. And for all Christ died ; that those also who live, may now live not for themselves, but for Him, Who died for them and rose again.

Saint Paul's opponents said he was out of his mind, in consequence of the lofty view he took of the destinies of man, redeemed in Christ, and the absolute nothingness of earthly things. The same charge was afterwards made against him by the Roman governor, Festus. (Acts xxvi. 24.) His reply here is, If I am mad it is for God's sake, lest you despise Him in despising His messengers and the message we deliver, and so perish in His anger.—St. Chrysostom. The *madness* he was accused of was nothing but the simple narration of what he had seen, heard, and done.—Theodoret. If we are *sober*, use the language of

humility, it is for you, that you also may learn to think and speak humbly of yourselves. In either case it is not in my own cause that I am mad or sober, but for God and for you.

14. What impels me is the consideration of the infinite charity of Christ, Who never sought His own, and submitted to a painful and ignominious death, regardless of life and reputation, to save mankind. And if He died for us all, He died to save us from eternal death, to which we were all therefore liable. But He died for us, that we, restored to hope of life by His death and resurrection, may no longer live for ourselves, but for Him. And in giving all my life and energies to His service I am doing that to which every consideration of reason, gratitude, duty, and affection irresistibly impels and urges me. This idea is further amplified in the following verse.

16. Therefore we henceforward know no one after the flesh. And if we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him not.

17. If there is therefore in Christ a new creature, the old has passed away: behold all things are become new.

16. We, as dead, risen, living in Christ, and for Him alone, no longer regard, respect, or love any human being for considerations of earth, whether Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor, relatives or strangers, aliens or citizens, but only with reference to Christ, and for God's sake. And if formerly we have known Christ Himself in the flesh during His mortal life (he says this in the name of other disciples of Christ, who regarded him with simply personal affection, as Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas observe), we have learned now to regard Him with a higher and more spiritual reverence, as our God, Redeemer, and Lord. Probably some of Saint Paul's opponents, who

were Jews, had listened to the teaching of Christ in Judea, and took advantage of this circumstance to claim authority as teachers; and it is to such persons that Christ referred in Matt. vii. 22, 23. *I know you not.*

17. And what is true of us, the Apostles, is equally true of you, and of all baptised Christians. Your baptism has been a new creation. The old world has passed away. Its affections, ambitions, objects of desire, are all, for you, past and over. They are replaced by a new life and a new world, new motives, new objects, a new principle of existence; to you, as to us, *all things are become new.*

18. And all of God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ: and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation.

19. That in truth God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their faults, and placed in us the word of reconciliation.

18. This new creation proceeds wholly from God, the Author of all good. The Syriac version joins the words to the preceding, *all things are made new by God*; Who has reconciled us, formerly His enemies by sin, to Himself by the merits of Christ. And He employs us, the Apostles, as His messengers and fellow workers in this reconciliation: not only the office of proclaiming it, but also of effecting it by baptism and remission of sin. *All power is given to Me; go ye therefore; teach, and baptise. As My Father sent Me, I also send you.*

19. This is a fuller statement of what is said in the last verse: 1. That God is the Author of our reconciliation in Christ; 2. God is the source and origin of the power which Christ gave to his Apostles. The Syriac version, followed by St. Chrysostom, and the Greek Fathers, understand the Apostle to say that it is God Who, through Christ, reconciled

the world to Himself. Many Latin writers, ancient and modern, understand it, *God was in Christ* by unity of essence. The Father in the Son, because their substance is the same : for where there is no difference, there is unity. The Latins accordingly make use of these words to prove the unity of the Father and the Son. God was in Christ, not reconciling Himself to the world, for the salvation of man proceeded from His mercy, but the world to Himself, to induce them to accept this mercy, *not imputing to them their faults*. This task of reconciliation of the world He entrusted to the Apostles. O, the depth of the clemency of God ! For the Father sent the Son as His legate, and beheld Him put to death by those who needed reconciliation. Yet, even then, He did not abandon us, but entrusted to His Apostles the *ministry of* reconciliation, to bring back to God those who had rebelled against him.—Theophylact.

20. For Christ, therefore, we discharge an embassy. As if God were exhorting you through us, we entreat you in Christ's name be reconciled to God.

21. Him, Who knew not sin, He made sin for us, that we might be made the justice of God in Him.

20. *For Christ therefore we are ambassadors.* That which God the Father once did through Christ made man, He continues now to do through us, the vicars of Christ.—Theophylact from St. Chrysostom. So precious in God's sight is the race of man, that for us He gave His Son to death, and appointed us His Apostles.—*Omnia Propter vos*, iv. 15. It is not we who exhort you : Christ entreats you : the Father implores and beseeches you.—St. Chrysostom. Wonderful instance of indulgence, kindness, humility ! God is the offended party, yet He sends an embassy to implore pardon, as if He had done wrong to us. We are to forgive God, and enter into His grace.—Theophylact.

21. *Him Who knew not sin.* He who is without sin, is ignorant of its nature, says St. Augustine. Christ was so alien from sin that it was as if He could not even understand it. He was justice itself. Yet God *made him sin* for us; delivered Him to death as a sinner and the worst of men. Punished Him in our place, as if He had been sin itself, guilty of all sin, Himself the universal sin. Probably, however, the words are intended to signify *an offering for sin*; the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world. God put upon Him the iniquity of all of us. (Is. liii. 6.) *That we might be made the justice of God.* Just by the grace of God, perfectly just before God, participators in God's justice. That sinners might be justified with God in Christ.—Ambrose. And, St. Anselm: He is *sin*, and we are *justice*; not our own, but *God's*; not in us but *in Him*. Just as He is sin, not His own, but ours, not in Himself, but in us, by the likeness of the flesh of sin, in which He was crucified.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Man, before baptism, is in the *nothing* of sin. For, as Saint Augustine says, sin is nothing; men do, when they sin, *nothing*. But by baptism man passes from the nothing of sin to a divine and supernatural existence, the existence of grace, and from nothing becomes the child of God, the consort of the divine nature. A new creation, a new creature. But, as in baptism we received a new existence, spiritual, supernatural, divine; so also in baptism there is infused into us a new principle of life and action, divine and spiritual, life and action through charity. The creature being *new*, its mode of operation should be also new, and the creature being divine and spiritual, so its mode of action should be spiritual and divine. The old has passed away from our grasp and cognisance. Dead to the flesh, we should not live after

the flesh ; risen and living with Christ, we are to live the spiritual life of Christ. To both we are pledged ; to the mortification of the flesh, by the renunciation of Satan and all his works ; to the life of Christ, by the promise of obedience to the commandments of God. In the degree in which we act spiritually, we act Christianly. Are you a Christian ? And how far ? Do you act carnally or spiritually ? For you will be a true Christian if you are altogether dead to yourself, living to Christ, walking in newness of life. You are the servant of Christ, bought with His blood. The servant is not his own but his Lord's ; he who is ransomed and purchased, belongs to his Redeemer. This illustration, drawn from the customs and ideas of ancient times, is not strictly true in the figure ; for any right of purchase or property in man is superseded by the original right of the individual to freedom. But the right of the individual to freedom is itself superseded by the original claim of God as Creator and Benefactor, Who alone is able to provide for our eternal happiness. Christ is our Creator, our Redeemer, our promised inheritance of bliss. We are His by all three titles. To withdraw ourselves from His service and live for ourselves, is to be guilty of rebellion, and robbery, and sacrilege ; for we belong to Him Who made us, Who redeemed us, and has promised Himself to us as our eternal reward.

CHAPTER VI.

1. AND in aid of God we exhort you, lest in vain you receive the grace of God.

2. For He says : In a time accepted I heard thee, and in a day of salvation I succoured thee. Behold now the acceptable time ; behold now the day of salvation.

In this chapter the Apostle earnestly exhorts the Corinthian Christians to holiness of life, and to shun the dangerous society of unbelievers.

1. As ambassadors of God, aiding Him in His work of salvation, we exhort you not to render the gift of God's grace, conferred upon you by our ministry, useless and ineffectual. The grace of God, says Saint Anselm, is the remission of sins, which is rendered useless to those who do not, after receiving it, persevere in good works. The same writer says elsewhere: The grace of God is the power of doing that which is good, a power depending on God—*without Me you can do nothing* ; and it is received in vain by him who labours not with God's help, and adds not to it his own endeavours to fulfil God's will by God's assistance.

2. God said to Christ on the cross (Is. xlix. 8) : In an acceptable time I have heard Thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped Thee. That acceptable time is now, for Christ is crucified. Before Christ it was not *day* but night, says Saint Thomas ; all shadows and darkness. Before Christ there was no *salvation*, for none attained to saving faith, or to the vision of God. Now is the *day of salvation*. Day, for the light has shone ; salvation, for salvation is obtained in Christ.

3. To none giving any offence, that our ministry may not be spoken against.

4. But that in all things we may exhibit ourselves as God's ministers, in much patience, in tribulations, in necessities, in perplexities,

5. In stripes, in prisons, in tumults, in labours, in vigils, in fasts,

6. In chastity, in science, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Spirit, in charity not feigned,

7. In the world of truth, in the power of God, by the arms of justice on the right hand and the left.

8. Through glory and dishonour, through infamy and good repute: as seducers and true, as those who are unknown and known.

9. As the dying, and behold, we live; as chastised and not slain:

10. As sad, and always rejoicing; as poor, and making many rich; as having nothing, and possessing all.

Saint Paul implies, in this passage, that his example, and that of his fellow-labourers, in their brave endurance of suffering and persecution, should not be thrown away upon his readers, but nerve them to similar firmness in resisting attacks upon their faith, a quality in which it is evident he feared they were deficient. Secondly, he defends himself and his colleagues against the calumnies of their opponents. And thirdly, he tacitly rebukes the cowardice, self-indulgence, and other vices of those opponents themselves, by comparison and contrast.

We are careful not to give offence to any, lest blame should fall upon our ministry. The Syriac: lest there be a *mole* on our ministry. Whose life is despised, says Saint Gregory, his preaching will also be despised. A public sinner sins by preaching, says St. Thomas.

4. *In all things*, times, and circumstances, showing

ourselves to be fit ministers of God; and in the example of every virtue. In *much* patience, not in patiently enduring suffering once, but again and continually. He places patience first, as the foundation of every good quality, and especially the foundation of the Apostolic life. Then he particularises the circumstances in which this patience has to be exercised. In tribulations, common or ordinary distresses or annoyances. In *necessities*, poverty and destitution, great and pressing; in perplexities, anxieties, solitudes, grave and critical.

5. In *stripes* or blows, with whips or stones. He says more on this subject in chapter xi. of this Epistle. In *prisons* or dungeons, in which he was more than once immured, as in one notable instance in Philippi, recorded in Acts xvi. In tumults or seditions, the people being stirred up to insurrection against him, as occurred not long before at Ephesus, and not long after at Jerusalem. In *labours*, incurred in travelling and in the fulfilment of his ministry, as well as in toiling for his own maintenance and support (Acts xviii. 3). In *vigils*, for prayer, or teaching, or toiling. In *fasting*, of necessity, through poverty; and voluntarily, for mortification, to give effect to his prayers.

6. In *chastity*, the special mark of the true Church of God; *science*, the knowledge of the faith and of the holy scriptures; *long-suffering*, or patience, and charity towards those who injured or offended him; *sweetness*, or gentleness to all; in the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and in charity, not in word only, but in act and deed, not feigned, but real.

7. In *the word of truth*. In the faithful and sincere enunciation of the true Gospel of God; and the attestation of it by the power of miracles, by the *armour of justice*, with which we are girded to the right and left, always kept faithful to God, and always just.

8. Whether honoured or despised, well or ill spoken of,

Christ's soldiers are to march, guarded on right and left by the armour of justice, by which they protect themselves from the assaults of the devil. In prosperity fear, in adversity be confident.—St. Anselm. In glory they are not to exult, in infamy not be daunted; so will they preserve justice. St. Thomas: Called impostors and seducers, we continue to speak the truth; seeming to be ignoble and obscure, we are in reality conspicuous, famous, and well known.

9. We seem always about to die; yet God saves us from death. We are punished by magistrates, imprisoned, flogged, yet we are never killed.

10. We look as if we were depressed and saddened by the multiplied evils we endure, yet we always rejoice interiorly in God. Poorest of the poor, we enrich many, not with spiritual goods only, but with temporal things also, as administrators of the alms of the Church. The sums of money of which the Apostles became trustees and distributors, appear from many indications in the New Testament to have been at times very considerable indeed. (See Acts iv. 34, vi. 3, 1 Cor. xvi. 3.) If they adopted a life of poverty it was not from necessity, or want of funds at their disposal. We *have nothing*, have stripped ourselves of all possessions, like St. Barnabas (Acts iv. 36), yet we find all that is necessary for our support by the providence of God. It is the prerogative of evangelical poverty to have nothing, wish for nothing, despise all for Christ, and in Christ possess all things. First, by interior greatness of heart (says St. Thomas), by which the pauper of the gospel is superior to all earthly things, and is lord of the world; and secondly, by the providence of God, who supplies him with the hundredfold Christ promised, and makes him in effect richer than if the world were his; happier, gayer, and more tranquil than if all things were legally his own. This was the experience of Saint Francis, poorest of the

poor, when he spent whole nights repeating, and as it were gloating over his treasure : *Deus et omnia, Deus meus et omnia.*

11. Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians! our heart is dilated.

12. You are not narrowed in us ; but you are narrowed in your own bonds.

13. But having the same remuneration, as to sons I speak : be you dilated also.

14. Do not bear the yoke with unbelievers : for what is the participation of justice with iniquity ? or what society has light with darkness ?

15. And what agreement of Christ with Belial ? or what part for a believer with an unbeliever ?

16. And what concord of the temple of God with idols ? for you are the temple of the living God, as God says : That I will dwell in them, and walk among them, and will be their God, and they shall be My people.

17. Therefore come out from the midst of them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and you shall touch not the unclean.

18. And I will receive you, and will be to you a father, and you shall be to Me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

I speak with open mouth to you, Corinthians, because my heart is dilated and expanded in affection toward you. It is no slight or narrow place you occupy in my affection and regard. It is your heart that is narrow, your affection that is slight, towards me. I say to you, as to my children, let your heart also be enlarged, reciprocate and return my affection. Have no fellowship with unbelievers (the practical conclusion of his argument and entreaties). You have as little in common with them as justice with iniquity,

light with darkness, Christ with *Belial*, the oriental deity of impurity. The Apostle's injunction appears to prohibit marriage with unbelievers; though by the law of the Church this was not actually forbidden as an invalidating objection, *impedimentum dirimens*, until the fourth Council of Toledo, A.D. 634.

The temple of God can make no covenant with idols. And you are the temple of God. The quotation in verse 16 is from Leviticus xxvi. 12. Verse 17 is from Isaiah lii. 11. Verse 18, Jeremiah xxxi. 1, 9. This reference to *idols* possibly points to the complicity with idol worship, treated of in the former Epistle.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Samuel the Prophet was brought up from childhood in God's temple, and there, during the remainder of his long life, he was always to be found. David prayed that if possible he might dwell in the temple of God all his life. Anna the Prophetess departed not from the temple, serving God with fastings and prayers day and night. The Christian is born in God's temple, which is the Holy Catholic Church; into which he is brought at his baptism, the beginning of his real and spiritual life. He is brought up in the temple, like Samuel; taught by the Church, joining in her devotions, worshipping at Mass, admitted, almost before childhood is over, to the Sacraments of Penance, Communion and Confirmation. And in that temple he dwells, as David prayed to dwell, all the days of his life, continually renewing his communion with God, obtaining pardon for his sins, assisting, weekly or daily, at the holy Sacrifice, having a part in the prayers of Holy Church, and contributing his own. Outside is storm and darkness, blindness and obscurity, wandering in hopeless error, night without starlight and without a dawn; sorrow, bitterness, desolation and despair. Happy those who,

like the aged Prophetess, depart not from the temple of God, but remain therein day and night, to the end. For when this transitory world shall have passed away, and God's presence shall be revealed, all the universe shall then become God's temple, wherein His glorious presence shall be visibly displayed. Those who on earth have made God's temple, the communion of the holy Catholic Church, their home and dwelling-place, will find that dwelling enlarged, glorified, magnified immeasurably in visible extent and splendour and magnificence: yet it will be their own home still. And from it they shall depart not, dwelling amid its glory and its loveliness, *inter splendores sanctorum*, and serving God with praise and transport night and day, for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VII.

1. Having, therefore, these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from the defilements of flesh and spirit, perfecting sanctification in the fear of God.

In this chapter the Apostle expresses the lively satisfaction and joy which he experienced in receiving from Titus the intelligence of the repentance of the Corinthian Christians, and of their favourable reception of his former letter.

1. This verse properly belongs to the last chapter, and forms the conclusion of the argument there maintained. *Having these promises*, that we are to be for ever the temple of God, and have God's presence dwelling within us, for ever His sons and daughters, and have Him for ever for our Father, *let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement*, either *of the flesh*, as luxury, gluttony and the like; and *of the spirit*, pride, envy, heresy. *Making perfect*, and cultivating to its true development, the *sanctification* we received in Baptism; and doing so in the *fear of God*. For the fear of God is not the beginning only, but the end of true sanctification. Filial fear is not inconsistent with love, but the contrary; for in the earthly relation they always go together. *Be ye cleansed, who bear the vessels of the Lord* (Isaiah lii. 11). The Christian priest is in a certain sense the Father of Christ, by consecration; and the Temple of Christ, whom he receives daily in the Mass.

2. Receive us. We have injured no one, we have corrupted no one, we have defrauded no one.

3. I am not saying it to your condemnation: for we

have said before that you are in our hearts, to die with you, and live with you.

4. Much is my trust in you, much is my glorying for you, I am filled with consolation, with superabundant joy in all our tribulation.

2. *Receive us.* The Greek word is *χωρίσατε* : make room for, contain, or hold us. The Vulgate, *Capite nos*, receive us without reserve, scruple, or suspicion, into your fullest confidence and affection. After the brief digression at the conclusion of the last chapter, the Apostle here returns to his defence of himself. The calumnies circulated against me are groundless and untrue. We have done wrong to none, corrupted none by false teaching, taken no profit or advantage from any. There are others who do, and are less worthy of your regard than we. I do not use this language in complaint of you, as if you suspected or accused me. It is not you, but those who seek to mislead you, who are my accusers. For you I entertain the fullest and most sincere affection, so that I would gladly die with and for you, gladly spend the rest of my life with you. It is my confidence in you that leads me to speak thus freely. I frequently speak of you to others as attached and devoted to me. The thought of you fills me, not with consolation only, but with a joy so deep that it outweighs all the troubles and annoyances I endure, and obliterates the recollection of it.

5. For, when we had come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, and we suffered every tribulation, fightings without, fears within.

6. But He Who consoles the humble, God, consoled us in the coming of Titus.

7. And not only in his coming, but also in the consolation by which he was consoled in you, reporting to us

your desire, your weeping, your emulation for me, so that I the more rejoiced.

8. So that although I made you sad in my letter, I do not repent : though I repented when I saw that the epistle, though only for an hour, made you sad.

5. Those troubles and annoyances were anything but trifling and insignificant. From my first arrival in Macedonia (from Ephesus) they left me no rest, outwardly and in the *flesh*. His spirit reposed, says Saint Anselm, in the hope of a reward to come, while his flesh felt the pain of present affliction. The soul of Paul was invincible, says Theophylact. Without were struggles with our persecutors, and *fears* within of fresh persecutions to come ; or of possibly occasioning scandal to the faith ; or for the faith of his new converts, as St. Anselm thinks ; or from false brethren *within* the Church. There are false brethren ; sons, but bad sons, who do not blaspheme Christ or oppose us openly, but who worship Christ with us, and persecute Him in us, as Absalom his father. Of such the Church is afraid lest they lead others astray, for they are a source of great and real danger.—Saint Anselm. It is observed that St. Luke makes no mention of these persecutions in Macedonia in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter xx.

6. God, the consoler of the downcast, consoled us by the arrival of Titus ; not by his presence only, though, as you now know, this was in itself no slight encouragement, but especially by the report he brought of you ; your earnest desire of amendment, your grief for your sins, your zeal in my defence, so that I had consolation greater than the sorrow I felt in writing such a letter. I almost repented having written it, knowing the sorrow it must cause you, and hearing of that which it did in effect cause you. The Greek reads : I repent no longer, because I see the Epistle really made you sorry, though only for an

hour ; but the sense of the Vulgate, as given above, seems clearer.

9. Now I rejoice, not that you are saddened, but that you were saddened to penance ; for you were saddened according to God, so that in nothing you suffer loss from us.

10. For the sorrow which is according to God operates penance to salvation which endures ; but the sorrow of the world operates death.

11. For behold this very thing, that you were saddened after God, how great solicitude it operates in you ; but defence, but indignation, but fear, but desire, but emulation, but revenge, in all you have shown yourselves pure in the matter.

12. Therefore, though I wrote to you, it was not on his account who did wrong, nor on his who suffered ; but to make evident the solicitude which we have for you in the presence of God.

9. Now I have no regret, but only gladness, not because you grieved, but because your grief was occasioned by the offence you gave to God, and such sorrow not only does no harm, but is of infinite advantage to the soul. Sorrow that springs from love of God produces salutary and durable repentance ; sorrow occasioned by love of this world, and of the creature, kills the soul. He who mourns lost riches, does not recover them ; he who sorrows for a lost friend, does not restore him to life ; he who grieves for the pain of disease, does not thereby cure it. And he has his mental sorrow in addition to his pain. But he who sorrows for his sins alone sorrows to any purpose, for he obtains remission of them.—Saint Chrysostom. Your sorrow first made you solicitous to remove the scandal, then anxious to defend yourselves from participation in it ; then indignant with the offender ; then afraid of the

recurrence of such cases ; then desirous of making satisfaction ; then zealous for God's honour, or for mine ; then determined to punish the guilty. Thus you have cleared yourselves from participation in guilt. And this was the real reason I wrote to you on the subject ; not simply for the salvation of the sinner, or for satisfaction to the person injured (a father whose second wife had been taken away from him by his son), but in discharge of my pastoral duty and solicitude towards you, and for the protection of the Church from evil example. But the Syriac reads : To make known in God's presence your diligence, or respect and affection for me. The meaning of the Greek appears to be : That your zeal for me may become known publicly to yourselves, before God.

13. Therefore we were consoled : and in our consolation we were abundantly rejoiced at the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14. And if I boasted of you to him, I am not confused : but as we spoke to you all things in truth, so also our glorying, which was to Titus, became truth.

15. And his affection is more abundantly in you ; remembering the obedience of you all : how with fear and trembling you received him.

16. I rejoice that in all I confide in you.

The consolation which was imparted to me by the report which Titus brought of you from Corinth, was greatly augmented by witnessing his own joy and satisfaction at all that he had seen and heard in Greece, and perceiving how greatly it had refreshed his soul. I had spoken much to him in your praise, and should have been put to shame if he had not found you all that my report had prepared him to expect. As you found I was right, and all things true I said to you ; so he acknowledged that I did not.

exaggerate in all I had said to him of you. The respect and affection with which he regarded you were increased by the recollection of the reception you gave him, as my representative, and the reverence and awe with which you listened to him. I acknowledge with joy that I can trust you in all things, and that there is nothing good and noble which I may not expect and ask from you. And I am now about to put this expectation to the test.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Sorrow is the lot of all mankind, and various in its causes as the multifarious objects of desire from which they hope to derive pleasure and satisfaction. For all end in disappointment. Riches elude our grasp, friends die or are estranged, animosities, inexplicable and apparently causeless, encounter us; suffering or poverty is the lot of the greater number in their path through life. And it is wisely so ordained. It was not so in the Garden of Eden, for the sense of God's presence, and the vision or conception of His glory, raised the thoughts and hearts of man above this world, and there was no danger of too great attachment to created things, even amid the sunshine and flowers of Paradise, withdrawing the heart of man from God. But that vision, all but a far-off reflection of it, has passed from the sight of men, and in its absence, in the fulness of our longing for joy, and affection, and appreciation of beauty, which is the attribute of the human soul, we should be in danger of falling down and worshipping the creature, rather than the Creator, were it not for the attendant footsteps of sorrow and disappointment, which follow us day by day from the cradle to the grave. So we learn that the satisfaction of our desires cannot be here. But there are two ways of meeting sorrow. The sorrow of the world worketh death. At first, like children, who beat the

thing that hurts them, we turn round upon the earthly instrument, whoever it may be, through whom God chastens us, and upbraid or hate it. When we learn better than this, we turn round upon God, and upbraid or hate Him, as the real author of our misery. And so, in hopeless despondency, and gloomy sullenness, refusing the kindness which would reconcile us, and repulsing the aid of the hand that would console us, we go despairing and wrathful to our graves. But it need not be so, and God does not so intend it. Sorrow is part of our lesson of life: part of our conformity and assimilation to Christ: part of our penance for our sins. Accepted generously, it fits us for immortality, becomes the cross which leads to glory, procures for us forgiveness of sin. Sorrow according to God, taken as God sends it, *operates penance*, does penance for us, *in salutem stabilem*.



CHAPTER VIII.

1. AND we make known to you, brethren, the grace of God, which is given in the churches of Macedonia :

2. That in much experience of tribulation there was great abundance of their joy ; and the depth of their poverty abounded unto the riches of their simplicity.

3. Because according to their strength, I bear them witness, and beyond their strength, they were ready and willing.

4. With much exhortation entreating of us, the grace and communication of the ministry made for the saints.

5. And not as we hoped, but gave themselves first to the Lord, then to us by the will of God.

6. So that we requested Titus, that as he began, so he would complete in you also this grace.

In this chapter the Apostle earnestly requests the Christians of Greece to contribute liberally to the relief of the destitute Christians of Judea, urging the noble example set by the Macedonians in this respect.

1. *The grace of God in the churches of Macedonia.* Given to the churches of Macedonia ; but since the whole Church shares in the graces and gifts of God, he regards this grace as a blessing and happiness bestowed upon the whole Church of Christ. He proceeds to explain what it was.

2. First, that in great affliction and persecution they were favoured with overflowing and abundant joy. This is not an unusual accompaniment of persecution, as is noted in the lives of many saints. Saint Chrysostom says that the joy experienced in persecution is deeper than imagination can conceive, and cannot be described.

in human language. The nature of the sufferings endured by the Christians of Macedon is not told us in detail, but that it was very great appears from I. Thess. i. 6; You received the word in great tribulation, with joy of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, that in the midst of great poverty and destitution, not unlike that which had fallen upon the Christians of Judea, and was owing to similar causes (see I. Thess. ii. 14) their poverty, deep and extreme as it was, overflowed in a large, wealthy, and generous liberality, which was offered in complete sincerity and simplicity of heart. Joy and exultation in trouble, munificent liberality in deep poverty, are evident signs and proofs of the omnipotence of God, operating in the midst of human frailty. This wonderful grace of God, conferred upon one portion of the Church, is a just subject of admiration, thankfulness, and rejoicing to the Church at large. They did not even wait to be asked, but volunteered of their own accord, presenting gifts not only to the full extent of their means, but even beyond them, as I can testify, being on the spot and witnessing it. With great earnestness and many entreaties they implored me to permit them, and arrange for them, to have a part in this *ministry of grace and communication* for the relief of *the saints*, as the Christians of Judea were called *par excellence*. According to the Greek text, which is followed by Theodoret, but not by the Syriac version, or the Vulgate, they implored me to receive and take charge of the ministry of grace and communication, that is, of the sums of money they collected. They did, further, what I did not expect, for they offered themselves first to the Lord, and to us by God's will; that is, they appointed some of their number to be at my disposal, and to go with me, or for me, to Jerusalem to convey the sums collected. And this splendid example has encouraged me to make it a particular charge to Titus, who is one of

the bearers of this letter, to urge you to similar liberality, thus completing the task he began among you during his recent visit to Greece.

7. But as in all things you abound in faith, and words and science; and in all solicitude, and further in your charity towards us, so you may abound also in this grace.

8. I do not speak as though in command; but through the solicitude of others proving the good disposition also of your charity.

9. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that on your account He became poor, when He was rich, that by His indigence you might be rich.

7. You are already well known and conspicuous, on account of the wonderful graces which God has so largely and liberally bestowed upon you; the gift of faith, the gift of languages, the gift of divine knowledge, the gift of diligence in administration, and the gift of charity, which last you have specially and abundantly manifested in your conduct towards me. I would have you, therefore, abundant also in the grace of liberality towards the poor.

8. I am not saying this as giving you an explicit command, though it might be within my power to do so; but by calling your attention to the diligence and fervour which have been exhibited by others, I wish to make trial of the practical reality of your charity, and the sincerity of your good dispositions. The Greek word *γνήσιον* signifies genuineness, ingenuousness, generosity, sincerity. To *prove* it, to make it more conspicuous and illustrious.—Theophylact.

9. For you need not be reminded that our Lord Jesus Christ, though He *was rich*, became poor for you, was born in a stable, had no home in which to lay His head, and dying, was buried in another's sepulchre, that by His

poverty in temporal things you might be enriched in spiritual things, in faith, piety, justice, grace, in glory in the eternal and enduring riches that are in the life to come. There is no possible or conceivable degree of liberality to others which that example will not cover or out-distance.

10. And in this I am giving you a counsel; for this is useful to you, since you have not only begun to do it, but also desired it last year.

11. Now, therefore, complete it also in fact; that as the mind of the will is ready; so there may also be readiness in bringing it to completion from what you possess.

12. For if the will is prompt, according to what everyone has, it is accepted, not according to that he has not.

13. Not that there may be to others remission, and to you tribulation, but by equality.

14. That at the present time your abundance may supply their want; and that their abundance may be the supplement of your want; that there may be equality.

15. As it is written: Who much, abounded not; and who little, was not deficient.

10. I give you, not a command, but a counsel, and one useful to yourselves, for the eternal reward you will obtain. St. Chrysostom says that if there were no poor, our salvation would be in a great part prevented, scattered, overthrown; for we should have nowhere to invest our money. You formed the intention last year, or a year ago, and have since actually begun to put it in execution; now, therefore, complete it without further delay, that the zeal of the intention may ripen into performance of the deed. Where there is good will, God accepts it, regarding the quality of the will that gives, rather than the amount of the gift given, and asking, not for what we have not, but

for what we have. Not that others should live in luxury and you be starved. The Thessalonians gave beyond their power; I do not ask of you *this*; but, St. Chrysostom adds, he asked it not, as knowing their weakness. Yet there should be some balance and equalisation, even of this world's goods, among those who have the same hope of immortality. Your abundance in temporal things will supply their temporal wants; their abundance of spiritual grace will, through their progress, increase your spiritual grace and consolation. Thus there will be balance and equality in another sense, as among the people of Israel when they gathered the manna (Exod. xvi. 18).

16. But thanks to God, who gave the same solicitude for you, in the heart of Titus.

17. Because indeed he accepted the exhortation; but since he was very earnest, of his own will he set out to you.

18. We have sent also with him the brother whose praise is in the Gospel through all the Churches.

19. And not that only, but also was ordained by the Churches as a companion of our pilgrimage, for this grace which is ministered by us, to the glory of the Lord, and our destined good will.

20. Avoiding this, lest any blame us in this plenitude which is ministered by us.

21. For we provide what is good, not only before God, but also before men.

I thank God that Titus was as zealous as myself to engage in your service, and did not need exhortation to do so, for he goes of his own accord. He (Titus) was one of the bearers of this letter, and though the Apostle says *he set out*, he must have written before Titus had actually left. This is the opinion of St. Chrysostom. One of his

companions is the well-known Evangelist, whose praise is in all Churches, for the Gospel he has written, and preaches; and who has been especially commissioned to accompany me with a view to this special service, the administration of the fund for the Christians of Judea. *Our destined good will*, v. 19, or purpose and resolution to this effect, is in the Greek, for the glory of the Lord and the exhibition or *declaration of your readiness and zeal*. And also because, being entrusted with the care of very large sums of money, I am anxious to avoid all suspicion or calumny, and do not choose to encounter alone the responsibility of conveying it. For we should regard, not our conscience only, but the eyes of the world, and avoid suspicion. Our conscience is our own affair, says Saint Augustine, but our good fame affects our neighbours.

The brother referred to in verse 18 is by Theodoret supposed to be St. Barnabas. But it is certain that St. Barnabas was not now the companion of St. Paul. Baronius thinks it was Silas; but the majority of writers agree in the received opinion, which is that of St. Jerome, that it means the Evangelist St. Luke. St. Ignatius, writing to the Ephesians, uses the same phrase, in referring to St. Luke, which is here used by St. Paul; *whose praise is in the Gospel*.

22. And we have sent with them also our brother, whose zeal we have proved on many occasions; and now is much more zealous, from his great confidence in you.

23. Whether for Titus, who is my companion, and coadjutor towards you, or our brethren, they are Apostles of the Churches, a glory of Christ.

24. Exhibit to them, therefore, the attention which belongs to your charity, and our glory for you, in the face of the Churches.

Together with Titus and Luke, we have sent another, who is not named, but is characterised as habitually diligent in any business entrusted to him, and most anxious to undertake this commission, from his confidence in you. In the Greek, these last words are simply with *great confidence in you*, and are by some interpreters considered to refer to what follows. I send these three in perfect confidence that you will accord them a suitable and honourable reception. Titus is my colleague or companion in my Apostolical journey; the other two are *Apostles of the Churches*, who must be distinguished from the Apostles of Christ; and are worthy of the splendid title which St. Paul further adds. I am sure you will accord them such a reception as may be expected from your charity, and such as will bear out all I have said to them in your praise; and in doing so you will be paying a mark of attention and respect, not to them only, but to the Churches from whom they are sent.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The Christians of Macedon were a model and pattern for the Christians of all time; first, because they were joyful under tribulation, which is certainly, from the nature of the case, a supernatural grace; and secondly, that in their poverty, they were liberal in giving. They gave to the full extent of their power to give. They gave beyond the full extent of their power to give, if that is possible. They gave of their own accord, not waiting to be asked. They entreated to be allowed to give. And they gave, not their goods only, but themselves, ready in all things to obey the will of God. This is true charity, and what we should endeavour to imitate. Give to God your heart, yourself, your life, and all you have, offering and consecrating all these, of your own free will, to the Church and to the poor. And when about to give alms,

like the Macedonians, first offer your heart to God : then ratify and confirm that gift by free and generous almsgiving to the poor. Look upon almsgiving as a tribute and acknowledgment of God as your Lord, and Lord of all that is yours ; give therefore humbly and with reverence. So will God accept you, and accept your gift. God looked first upon Abel, and then upon the offerings he brought (Gen. iv. 4). He regards the heart of the giver, before He looks at the gift. And do not despise the person you relieve. He may be richer than you. The Lord of the universe *mendicavit*, says Erasmus. He was Lord of the universe still, but poor in outward things, for your sake. And therefore he condescends to be represented by the poor, because it was among them that, when on earth, he chose to take his lot.



CHAPTER IX.

1. FOR of the ministry which is being rendered to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you.

2. For I know your ready mind ; for which I boast of you to the Macedonians : since also Achaia was ready last year ; and your zeal has provoked a large number.

3. But I send the brethren, lest what we boast of you be brought to nothing in this matter : that as I said, you may be ready.

4. Lest if any Macedonians come with me, and find you not ready, we blush (that I say not you) at this ground of boasting.

In this chapter the Apostle urges the Greek Christians, not to give, for this he says is unnecessary, but to do so freely, cheerfully, and, above all, promptly and at once.

1. I have introduced the three bearers of this letter, who are commissioned to make the collection of money, but with regard to the collection itself I need not urge you. For I know your *promptitude*. There is some gentle irony in this praise. The promptitude was in their minds, but he wishes it to be brought to practical effect, without further delay. They were *ready* last year. He had reported this to the Macedonians, who at once acted on the example, and with extraordinary liberality ; and he now turns the tables on the Greeks, urging them by the example of the Macedonians. There seems some reason to apprehend that it may, after all, come to nothing, *evacuatur*, or to very little, and I therefore send the three brethren in hopes they will find you, as I have boasted, *ready*. If when I come (and the Apostle very quickly

followed his letter) the Macedonians who accompany me find that nothing has been done, I may be put to shame, as having boasted of you without cause, and you, as negligent in the performance of what you have undertaken.

Although the Apostles did not travel with a pompous retinue, it is evident from many passages in the New Testament that they were in the habit of being escorted from place to place by a deputation of the Christian community in each place they were leaving. (See 1 Cor. xvi. 6, Rom. xv. 24.) The word translated *substantia*, *ground of boasting*, at the end of v. 4 is correctly rendered in the Anglican version *confidence of boasting*.

5. I therefore thought it necessary to request the brethren to go on to you beforehand and provide that this promised blessing should be ready, as a blessing, not as avarice.

6. But I say this: Who sows sparingly shall sparingly also reap; and who sows in blessings, in blessings also shall reap.

7. Every one as he has destined in his heart, not of sadness, or necessity: for a glad giver God loves.

8. And God is able to make all grace abound in you: that in all things, at all times, having all sufficiency, you may abound to every good work.

9. As it is written: He has dispersed, He has given to the poor; His justice endures for ever and ever.

5. Lest we should be thus put to shame, I have thought it prudent to send the brethren to have all ready beforehand. *The promised blessing*, for almsgiving is a blessing to the receiver, and brings God's blessing on the giver. It should be given, therefore, not tardily, unwillingly, sparingly, or with rough words. That is the tribute of

avarice. He who gives alms unwillingly, says St. Chrysostom, gives avarice, not blessing.

6. Alms are seed sown in the hands of the poor, as God's field. The harvest will be gathered in his embrace. He who sows but little, will also reap little, in comparison with him who, with equal opportunities, sows much; but the reward will in any case be great, in comparison with the value that is given. He who *sows in benedictions*, spends his money liberally and systematically for the relief of the poor, will reap a large and plentiful harvest of the benediction of God. Yet the value is estimated by the intention of the giver, rather than the value of the gift. The widow gave all she had, but it was but two half farthings.

7. But above all, the gift should be voluntary, not compulsory. If you are sorry to part with your money, keep it. If you only give because others do, you are not in the least compelled to follow their example. *A glad giver* is what God loves, approves, rewards. *In all thou givest, make thy countenance glad* (Ecclus. xxxv. 11). He who gives bread to a poor man *sadly*, loses both the merit, says St. Augustine, and the bread.

8. Do not be under any apprehension that if you give too freely and largely, you yourself may possibly come to want. God is at least as generous as you, and more powerful; He is able to make *all grace* abound to you, temporal as well as spiritual. For this mortal life you shall always have what is *sufficient* wherever you may be, whatever you may stand in need of, for as long as you require it. And more, you shall have *abundance* for works of charity. The less we spend on ourselves, the more we have to give to others. Saint Chrysostom takes this as a prayer. He asks for them, in carnal things, what is *sufficient*; in spiritual things, *abundance*.

9. Ps. cxi. 9, *His justice remains for ever.* That is, his alms. Alms is called *justice*, because it makes the just

man more just ; and obtains remission of sin. *Take heed that you do not your justice before men* (Matt. vi. 1). Seed sown in the ground does not perish, but *remains*, and bears fruit ; so does the alms of the just given to the poor. *For ever and ever*. In time and in eternity. In time, for God's blessing will give you larger means for the exercise of your bounty ; in eternity it will have an eternal reward. You need not, therefore, be under any apprehension about giving more than is prudent, for what you give is not lost, but *remains*. It seems marvellous, says St. Chrysostom, that all we keep perishes, and all we give *remains*, for time and eternity. Saint Basil (on Luc. xii.) compares riches to a well. A spring always flowing is continually renewed, but if still it stagnates. Wealth hoarded is useless ; given to the poor it becomes fruitful. When the infant sucks the breast, says Saint Clement of Alexandria, the milk will flow ; and when riches are spent on the poor, the supply, by God's promises, is unfailing.

10. And He Who administers seed to the sower, will both supply bread to eat, and multiply your seed, and augment the increase of the fruit of your justice.

The Greek text, as we now have it, the Arabic version, Saint Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact, all read these words in the optative mood, as a prayer. May God supply you with bread, and increase the fruits of your justice. The Vulgate, and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, take it in the future indicative, as above. The figure used by the Apostle is intended to illustrate what he said in verse 8 that it is in God's power to do, and in verse 9 that He ordinarily does ; give to the just sufficiency for their own life, and abundance for the poor. A landlord gives the cultivator seed to sow, and bread for himself to eat until the crop grows up. And he gives him also a share in the crop itself when the harvest

comes. That share gives him a larger supply of seed for the next sowing, so that he can extend the breadth of his operation for the next, and more and more in future years. Thus God gives to the giver of alms, who is His cultivator, the temporal goods which he is to bestow in alms, and which are the seed he has to sow. 2. He also gives him what is necessary for his own subsistence. 3. He multiplies the seed, by increasing the means at his disposal for liberality; and 4. He will *augment the increase of the fruit of justice*, give a spiritual and eternal reward immeasurably great, beginning in this life and continued hereafter, the recompense of *charity*. Alms are the seed of a threefold harvest, the multiplication of temporal goods, the increase of grace and sanctity, the merit of everlasting glory. As Christ said (Acts xx. 35), *It is happier to give than to receive*. The reward is given certainly in the life to come, also ordinarily in this: for the givers of alms are ordinarily better off than the avaricious. But God's providence is not in this invariable and always the same, for sometimes, for the trial of faith, and greater glory to the just, it happens otherwise.

11. That enriched in all things, you may abound to all simplicity, which operates through us thanksgiving to God.

12. Because the ministry of this duty not only supplies what is wanting to the saints, but abounds also through many thanksgivings in the Lord.

13. By the trial of this ministry glorifying God in the obedience of your confession, to the Gospel of Christ, and simplicity of communication to them and to all.

14. And in their entreaty for you, desiring you on account of the eminent grace of God in you.

15. Thanks to God for His unutterable gift.

11. *Enriched in all things*, in what is sufficient for this life, and the treasures of the life to come. *You may abound in simplicity*—that is, as Saint Chrysostom understands, in munificence. This gives us cause of thanksgiving to God; of which the Apostle always speaks as if it were a good in itself, owing to the kindness of God, who is pleased with our thanks. God's gifts proceed from His bounty, and return to Him in thanksgiving.

12. *The ministry of this duty*, of almsgiving. In the Greek, the *diaconate* of this *liturgy*. He regards it as a sacrifice. The priests are the Corinthian almsgivers, the deacons the administrators of the bounty—Paul, Titus, and the others; the victim, the alms offered; the altar, the poor at Jerusalem; the incense, the giving of thanks to God.

13. This service affords them proof of the reality and sincerity of your confession of faith, and obedience to God's invitation to receive the Gospel of Christ, and of your genuine and unaffected liberality and desire to make all men partakers of the good things you possess.

14. And they glorify God in the prayers they offer for you, desiring earnestly to see you, for the excellence of the grace, the faith and charity, which He has bestowed upon you, and of which your liberality is a proof and indication.

15. *Thanks to God for His unutterable gift*. You are asked to give. Do not forget God's great Gift to you, with regard to which silent adoration is more eloquent than any language.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

God is incomprehensible by any human or any finite intelligence. No created mind can fathom the depth of His immensity. Yet it is this immense and infinite:

Deity, the Image and Likeness of God, His consubstantial Son, who is the Gift which God has sent us; not partially or in symbol, but in His own personality and completeness. This is what the shepherds of Bethlehem found in the manger of the stable of the inn; this, complete in body, blood, soul, Divinity, is what reposes in our tabernacles; this is what is given to the faithful in their communion. The Apostle may well call this gift *unutterable*, for it is inconceivable. Something we know: His boundless charity, His infinite self-sacrifice, His burning love for man, the divine beauty and wisdom of His words, the mercy shown in His deeds. We see Him an infant in the arms of Mary, we see Him stretched on the Cross. More we shall learn hereafter, but all we never can know. We shall spend eternity in learning the value of this gift, but in eternity, or an eternity of eternities, we shall never have learned our lesson, and shall still be at the beginning of it. Not that He will conceal His glory from us, for He gave Himself unreservedly to the knowledge and adoration of His Saints; but because that which is finite cannot measure the infinite. Too great for comprehension, and too great for thanks; yet we do comprehend, and with the Apostle, we thank God for His unutterable gift. For all eternity we be still learning, and still giving thanks; and when the Treasure is exhausted, so will be our thanksgiving. God's passion is to give; having given us all else that we could receive, He gave Himself. Human charity is a spark caught from the burning Heart of Christ. There have been Saints in all times, and doubtless are still, who cannot be satisfied but with sacrifice distantly resembling His. Like the Egyptian Saint Serapion, who, having given all he had to the poor, sold himself for a slave, and gave the money to the poor. Released after a long captivity, he went down to the market again, and sold himself for a slave, and

gave the money to the poor. We cannot comprehend God's nature ; but His gift reveals it to us in part. There is no limit to His infinite love for man. Thanks to God for His unutterable gift.

CHAPTER X.

1. AND I Paul myself, beseech you by the gentleness and modesty of Christ ; who in face indeed am humble among you ; but absent confide in you.

2. I entreat you that I may not be daring when present, with the confidence with which I am considered to be daring, against some, who judge us as if we walk according to the flesh.

In this chapter, and the two that follow, the Apostle proceeds to defend himself from the charges brought against him by his opponents at Corinth.

1. *I Paul myself.* The Apostle here abandons the use of the plural, as he is no longer speaking of himself in conjunction with his companions and colleagues. I have an earnest entreaty to address to you, by the gentleness and meekness of Christ. I am accused of being humble and retiring in bodily presence, but bold and lofty in the language I address to you at a distance. My request is that you will not compel me, when I come among you, to assert in my own person, and when present, the Apostolic authority I profess, and which is supported by miraculous power for the confusion of the guilty, against the base and unworthy traducers who bring against me the charge of using worldly craft and cunning in my dealings with you. *I Paul*, the Apostle. There is great emphasis and gravity in this use of his name, says St. Chrysostom, and it is used to carry dignity and authority. St. Thomas, on the other hand, sees in it an expression of his humility, as in reference to the etymological meaning of the name. *The gentleness* of Christ was one of the

best known and most striking of His attributes; and He refers to it Himself as generally known, in the words, *Learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble*. It is said that the Apostle Saint Peter could never speak of his Master without tears. This quality Saint Paul imitated, both in manner and disposition, and this gave rise to the ill-natured charge against him that he pretended to be meek and holy when present, but was full of arrogance and assumption when he expressed himself in writing.

3. For walking in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

4. For the arms of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful through God to the destruction of fortresses, overthrowing systems of philosophy.

5. And every height that exalts itself against the science of God, and leading every intellect captive into obedience to Christ.

6. And always ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience shall have been fulfilled.

I live, like other men, in the body, but my mode of warfare is not by force of arms. *The life of man is warfare*, says Job (vii. 1), but the Apostle refers especially to the assault upon the world and the devil, its prince, which he carried on under the command of Christ. The arms used in this war are spiritual, not carnal. Not riches, fame, cleverness, equivocation, facility of talk, and the like, such as are used by men of the world, but the Word of God, patience, gentleness, humility, prayer, charity. With these, to be used in case of necessity, there was an appeal to the miraculous power of the Spirit of God, such as he had exercised in the case of Elymas, the sorcerer (Acts xiii.). These arms have proved, and will prove again, effectual to the destruction of all the fortresses in which

our opponents entrench themselves. However high the tower may be reared, and supported by any plausible arguments of philosophy, and of worldly influence, it must come down before the assault of the Gospel of Christ. The highest intellect of man must be led captive, and made submissive to Christ; a prophecy wonderfully fulfilled in later ages, and exemplified even in the time of the Apostles, in the cases of Dionysius the Areopagite, the pro-consul Paulus, Clement of Rome, and many others, who have submitted to *the obedience of Christ*, which is man's highest happiness and freedom. Think of those who burned the books of their magic art, and you will see how Paul made prisoners.—Theophylact. See Acts xix. 19. These weapons, the most powerful of which is excommunication, we hold in readiness, if wanted, for the punishment of the disobedient. And these I intend to use against the impostors at Corinth, and those who have been misled by them, when time has elapsed sufficient to show who among you will accept the warning, and submit to the appointments of God.

7. Look at that which is before your face; if any trusts to himself that he is Christ's, let him think again with himself this, that as he is of Christ, so also are we.

8. For even if I should boast somewhat amply of our power, which the Lord gave us for edification, and not for your destruction, I shall not blush.

9. And that I may not be thought as it were to frighten you by letters.

10. Because indeed his letters, they say, are grave and strong; but his presence of body is infirm, and speech contemptible.

11. Let him who is of this sort think this, that what we are in word through letters when absent, such also present in act.

7. *Look at what is before your eyes.* Judge for yourselves, from the facts which are evident and patent to your observation. But the Greek and the Syriac, followed by St. Chrysostom, take the words as a question, which gives a different sense. Do you look no further than merely outward appearances, and believe only what you see? If any of those to whom I am referring boasts of being a minister of Christ, he must at least acknowledge the same of me, and that we are so far on an equality. I might say a great deal more of the special powers of the Apostolate, which Christ has entrusted to me. This power God has given me for the edification or building up of His spiritual temple, the Catholic Church, or the Christian doctrine. But it is a two-edged weapon, and might in extreme necessity be turned to the destruction of those who pertinaciously oppose it. If I am called upon to draw the sword from its sheath, I am not at all afraid of having to *blush* for any failure in the efficacy of the weapon. But I refrain from enlarging on this (Syriac, I close my eyes), lest they should say, as usual, that I am thundering in the upper sky, and trying to frighten you at a distance with the sound and terror of my words. His letters, they acknowledge, are *weighty and strong*, in power of argument and expression. But his bodily presence is insignificant, and his power of speaking *contemptible*. It is very difficult to imagine on what this last impression or opinion can possibly have been founded, for the Acts of the Apostles contain unmistakable evidence that St. Paul's power of persuasive oratory was extremely great. (See his address at Antioch, Acts xiii.; that before Agrippa, Acts xxvi., and the effect of his presence and teaching at Corinth, Ephesus, in Cyprus, Macedonia, Malta, and many other places.) He was, however, it is believed, little of stature, and St. Chrysostom, in whose time some traditions of his aspect and appearance may easily have

been preserved, calls him a man of three cubits, a little over five feet high, who towered above the skies (Carn. à Lapide), and this account of him is confirmed by Nicephorus. He had also, as is inferred from something he says further on in this Epistle, a weakness of sight which gave him an appearance of infirmity. He was at this time, probably, nearly sixty years of age. But he adds. Whoever says these things of me will find, when I come, that my presence in the body corresponds to what he finds and acknowledges in my letters; words weighty and powerful enough to be terrible to those who persist in their opposition to the Gospel I am commissioned to announce, and the Apostolic authority which is entrusted to my hands.

12. For we venture not to include or compare ourselves with some, who commend themselves; but measuring ourselves with ourselves, and comparing ourselves with ourselves.

13. And we will not glory immeasurably, but by the measure of the rule which God marked out for us, a measure extending also to you.

14. For we do not overpass our boundary, as though we reached not to you; for we have arrived to you also in the Gospel of Christ.

12. *We venture not.* This is said in irony. I do not presume to compare myself with my opponents, who so loudly proclaim their own praise, and look down upon me and my companions. I do not compare myself with others at all, but have my own standard and measure of action—namely, the commission God has entrusted to me. The Greek reads the passage as follows: *They, measuring themselves by their own measure, and comparing themselves with one another, have no understanding.* This is followed

by the Syriac version, and by St. Augustine. It implies that the heretical teachers, having no other standard but their own, and looking down upon all the rest of the world, are lifted up with pride and vain-glory to a degree inconsistent with common sense. It is scarcely too much to say that these words would describe equally the mental attitude of some modern teachers of heresy.

13. I abstain from all boasting and self-glorification, and keep within the limits God has for the present assigned me, which are wide enough, for they extend from the frontier of Judea to Greece, inclusively. The figure is from the cord used in measuring plots of land, to assign to each proprietor his due share. God gives to each labourer in His vineyard his own piece of ground to cultivate : and the portion assigned to Saint Paul included Greece within its limit, the proof of which was that he had actually planted the Church in Corinth.

14. *We do not overpass our boundary.* My opponents are always boasting of their diligence in spreading their Gospel, but they cannot point to any city they have converted, or any Church they have planted, and their boasting is of the labours of others. But I very lawfully boast of you, who are my spiritual children, my vineyard, and the product of my labour.

15. Not boasting immeasurably of the labours of others ; but having hope of your increasing faith ; to be magnified in you according to our rule into abundance.

16. To preach the Gospel also in those lands which lie beyond you ; not to boast of what has been prepared in the rule of another.

17. And who glories, let him glory in the Lord.

18. For not he who commends himself is approved ; but whom God commends.

15. My opponents are in the habit of boasting, and boasting beyond all measure, of what are really the results of the labours of others, This I will not do. But I entertain the hope that as your faith is confirmed and increased, and the numbers of the Christian Church in Greece increase, two results will follow: First, I shall have due credit and honour, and that fully and abundantly, in proportion to the labour I have expended in the conversion of the people of your land; and, also, I shall thereby be encouraged and set free to extend hereafter my Apostolic labours in lands still further west, without entering the limits of countries which have been already prepared for the reception of the faith of Christ by the preaching of any of the other Apostles. It is clear, as St. Chrysostom observes, that the Apostle regarded the rule or limit assigned him by God's decree, as having no end or boundary than that of the world itself; and on this splendid inheritance he was prepared to enter, in all its full extent. And secondly, that he ascribed the grace which animated all his efforts, as well as the success which attended them, to God alone. For this reason he adds: Whoever wishes to glory or triumph, let him *Glory in the Lord*, from Whom, through Whom, and to Whom, all good things come and return. God alone gives honour, and he is approved and shown to be truly great, not who is so by his own suffrage and commendation of himself, but to whom God accords the proof of greatness, and the presence of His Spirit, in the work he is empowered and privileged to do.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The preceding chapter contains so many principles applicable to prelates and ecclesiastical superiors, in the discharge of their high office, that it seems reasonable to note them down successively.

1. A lofty view and firm maintenance of the high dignity of their office is not inconsistent with the most perfect personal humility.

2. The Prelate, imitating the gentleness of Christ, punishes unwillingly.

3. Whether strict or indulgent, whether he punishes or pardons, he must equally, in either case, expect that some one or other will find fault with him. He must, therefore, act as in God's presence, and disregard the censure of men.

4. The ecclesiastical Superior is a general officer in Christ's army. The arms he wields are patience, gentleness, humility, prayer, charity. With these arms the Apostles conquered kingdoms, overthrew the strongholds of error and false philosophy, and brought the world to the obedience of Christ. Upon the weapons of carnal warfare, money, influence, position, worldly greatness, he is not to rely, nor will they advance the kingdom of Christ.

5. Ecclesiastical authority is appointed to edify, not to destroy. Therefore the aim of the ecclesiastical Superior should continually be to edify, sanctify, and save the souls of his subjects; and never do what will hurt or hinder their salvation, even in inflicting punishment or censure. He is their healer, patron, father.

6. He is to keep within the limits of his jurisdiction.

7. He is to expect and look for the commendation of God, not that of man. For in looking for the praise of man he becomes subject to man; nor can it avail him in the great day of account.

CHAPTER XI.

1. I WOULD you could endure my folly a little while ; yet also bear with me.

2. For I am jealous of you with a jealousy of God. For I have betrothed you to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ.

3. But I fear lest, as the serpent seduced Eve by his craft, so your senses be corrupted, and fall away from the simplicity which is in Christ.

In this chapter the Apostle asserts and proves his own authority as a teacher of the faith, in contrast to his opponents, whose real character he exposes.

1. It is a mark of folly for a man to praise himself, but yet I wish you could be persuaded to put up with this folly in me for a little while, for I do it only under the pressure of absolute necessity. Therefore bear with me, and you will find that in my case self-assertion is in this instance wisdom, and not folly.

2. *I am jealous of you.* I have contracted you in marriage to Christ, and am *jealous* for His sake. God also uses this language : *The Lord thy God is jealous* (Exod. xx. 5). But Saint Paul is not jealous for himself, but for God, *with a jealousy of God.*

3. I fear that as Satan, concealed under the figure of the serpent, tempted Eve, and led her astray by his great craft and cunning ; so he may also corrupt your faith and fill your minds with error, by means of his false apostles, the teachers of heresy, and thus you may fall away from the pure faith which I have delivered to you, unmixed with error, and which alone is, in truth and reality,

faith in Christ. The words, *and fall away*, are not in the Greek, and appear to have been added by the translator of the Vulgate for the sake of clearness.

4. For if he who comes, preaches another Christ, whom we preached not ; or you receive another Spirit, whom you received not ; or another Gospel, which you accepted not ; you will rightly bear with him.

5. For I think I did nothing less than the great Apostles.

6. For though I am unskilful in speaking, yet not in knowledge, and in all we were made manifest to you.

If the new teacher who has replaced me, and intruded into my labours, tells of another Saviour than the Saviour we preached to you ; if under his instruction you receive another Holy Spirit, and a better Gospel than you received from us, you would in such a case be right in listening to him. But this is not so. The Saviour I made known to you, the Spirit I was the means of imparting to you, the Gospel I taught you, were all the same whom the great Apostles, Peter, John, James, proclaim and serve. You cannot point to any circumstance in what I said and did in which I am inferior to them. In the former Epistle (xv. 9) he had said : *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle* ; for which reason he here explains that in office and administration he was not inferior to the others. This is the interpretation which St. Chrysostom and all the ancient writers put upon the words. Many modern writers consider *the great Apostles*, or *Apostles in the highest degree*, as in the Greek, to be said in irony, of the heretical teachers.

6. *Though I am unskilful in speaking*, or am said to be ; at any rate, I am not without experience in the knowledge of God. He implies here that his opponents were, however fluently they discoursed in the language

of the Greek philosophy, which Saint Paul evidently despised. And I have dealt openly with you, and kept nothing in reserve; whereas they had concealed the poison of their heresy, and unfolded it only by degrees. Saint Paul's skill in the use of the Greek language to convey his thoughts is questioned by Origen and Saint Jerome, who acknowledge from his writings that he was *rude of speech*, though his style is undoubtedly nervous, forcible, and expressive in a very high degree. Saint Augustine fully acknowledged and admired his wonderful eloquence. There seems no ground for the impression some have derived from this verse, that he stammered, or was afflicted with any physical impediment of speech.

7. Or have I done any sin, humbling myself, that you may be exalted? Because I taught you the Gospel of God for nothing.

8. I spoiled other Churches, taking pay for your service.

9. And when I was with you, and in want, I was a burden to no one; for what I wanted, the brethren supplied who came from Macedon; and throughout I kept myself, and will keep myself, from being a burden to you.

10. There is truth of Christ in me, that this boast shall not be checked in me, in the climes of Achaia.

11. Why? Because I love you not? God knows.

12. But what I do, and will do, that I may cut off the occasion of those who seek occasion, that wherein they boast, they may be found even as me.

7. The heretics made it matter of offence that Saint Paul had not, as they did, lived upon the alms of the Christians of Greece. Is this, he asks, *a sin* in me? He was perfectly free in this respect, and his determined resolution to take nothing from the Greeks was perhaps founded on his knowledge of the wealth of the residents

of Corinth, and the sources whence the riches of the city were in great measure derived; lest it should be said he was attracted to that country by hope of gain. *I was a burden to no one.* In Greek, *κατεγάρκησά*, said by Saint Jerome to be a Cicilian idiom, of Saint Paul's native land. *Quæst ad Algas*, 10.

10. *There is truth of Christ in me.* This is an oath! As Christ's truth is in me. *This boast shall not be checked, stopped, or dammed up, like the course of a river.* My boast shall flow forth unchecked through the provinces of Achaia. It is not because I do not love you that I refuse your gifts, God knows. But those who blame me shall either cease their invective, or they shall do as I do, preach their doctrine at their own expense. Saint Chrysostom thinks they made a pretence of doing so, but received large presents secretly from the more wealthy of their adherents and supporters. It seems, however, more probable from verse 20 that they received this assistance openly, and were vexed with the Apostle because he would not do the same.

13. For false apostles of this kind are cheating workmen, transfiguring themselves into Apostles of Christ.

14. And no wonder; for Satan transfigures himself into an angel of light.

15. Therefore, it is not a great thing, if his ministers are transfigured as ministers of justice, whose end shall be according to their works.

They profess to be what we are, and assume the name and appearance of Apostles of Christ. They are like workmen who manufacture goods to sell, but whose work is hollow and worthless, only painted on the outside. They are in truth ministers of Satan, disguised as ministers of *justice*, or preachers of the holiness of God;

at which we need not be surprised, since Satan himself is transfigured as an angel of light. It does not appear whether the Apostle here refers to any special incident, or to the general character of the doings of the Evil One, as shown, for instance, in his temptation of Eve. His ministers are wolves in the clothing of sheep—teachers of error, going about masked as Apostles. God will one day tear the masks from their faces, and expose them, and *their end shall be according to their works*. This prediction the denunciation of the Apostle in the text undoubtedly helped to hasten and fulfil, for we find in many other passages of the New Testament ample evidence that the dreadful doctrines of these sectaries were known to, and exposed by, the Apostles, and they were shown in their true light as open enemies of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is probable that many of them perished in the Jewish War.

16. I say again, let no one think me a fool ; or else, as a fool receive me, that I also may glory for a little.

17. What I speak, I speak not according to God, but as if in folly, in this confidence of glory.

18. Since many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

16. I repeat what I said before : my boasting ought not to be considered a mark of folly, for I have good reasons for the course I am now pursuing. But if you will not grant me this, then grant me the privilege of a fool, the licence of boasting for a while. If my words do not sound like Christian humility, yet my intention in speaking them springs from charity, and is *according to God*, for my object is to prevent you despising a minister of Christ, and listening to the ministers of Satan. Others are fond of boasting of external claims to respect, and if I seem to imitate their folly, you will bear with me, as you bear with

them. A modern Protestant commentator insists that the words, *I say again*, in verse 16, signify I *retract* or withdraw what I said before, and say the opposite; but this seems an unnecessary refinement, for the Apostle after all repeats very much the same thing as he said in verse 1. The Apostle's humility and charity are very conspicuous in this passage. Humility, in repeating so often his excuse for speaking of himself, which shows how unwillingly he did so; and his charity in doing what was evidently distasteful to him, for the salvation of the Corinthians.

19. For you willingly bear with fools, being wise yourselves.

20. You bear it, if one reduces you to slavery, if one devours you, if one takes presents from you, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you in the face.

21. I speak to your dishonour, as if we were weak in this respect. What any dares (I speak in folly), I also dare.

19. I do not deny your wisdom; but it is certain that you do submit, without remonstrance, to the proud and arrogant self-assertion of others, far worse than anything you have had, or will have, to put up with from me; and indeed to absolute outrage and insult at their hands. You allow them to sell you into slavery, probably for money advanced; to seize and appropriate your goods; to exact heavy contributions from you under the name of gifts; to treat you as inferiors; sometimes to strike you in the face. These are unquestionably allusions to incidents which the Apostle knew to have occurred at Corinth, in the conduct of the heretical teachers or their influential supporters and allies. Some writers think that the expression, *strike you in the face*, is metaphorical; but

there is no difficulty in supposing that it may, in some case or cases, have occurred literally. Verse 21, Saint Chrysostom says, is obscure, and apparently refers to some occurrence of a still more serious nature, which the writer does not choose to particularise more exactly. Whatever it was, it did not redound to the honour of the Corinthian Christians. And because I do not behave in the same way, you put it down, or are told to put it down, to weakness or cowardice on my part. I must protest, foolish as the remark may sound, that I am as bold as others, in cases where boldness is required, or would be honourable and right. Of the truth of this statement he proceeds to give ample proof in the following verses.

It is, however, observed by Cornelius à Lapide, from Lalmeron, that what the Apostle here complains of, is the custom of the world, and has been so in all ages, and will be to the end of time. The servants of God are resisted and defied. On the smallest provocation, or appearance of provocation, men will murmur against them, cry out against them, complain of their measured and moderate severity, reject the very idea or appearance of ecclesiastical discipline ; while at the same time they will exhibit the most abject and servile submission to teachers of heresy, give them full licence, submit to whatever exactions they lay upon them ; as the people of Israel, rejecting the modest and gentle government of the Prophet Samuel, preferred the yoke of a haughty and tyrannical king (see 1 Reg. viii.). And an ecclesiastical superior, who attends to, and discharges faithfully, the duties of his office, if he finds himself despised and looked down upon on that account by his own flock, may comfort himself by the example of the Apostle Saint Paul, to whom the Corinthian Christians preferred the false apostles of their day, although these last tyrannised over them, robbed and insulted them, and crushed them under

the weight of worldly influence and power. Another, who neglected the duties of his office, and the salvation of his flock, might very possibly find himself spoken of with honour, and valued and respected by the selfish and the worldly. If so, he should bestow a thought on these false teachers of the Corinthians, and consider whether, in partaking their worldly honour, he may not also be partaker of their guilt. At any rate, he cannot reasonably congratulate himself upon distinction at the hands of the world, which he shares with the ministers of Satan.

22. They are Hebrews, and I ; they are Israelites, and I ; they are the seed of Abraham, and I.

23. They are ministers of Christ, I speak as one not quite wise ; I am more ; in labours very many, in prison more often, in stripes beyond measure, in deaths frequently.

24. From the Jews five times I received forty less one.

25. Thrice I have been beaten with a rod, once I was stoned, thrice I have been shipwrecked, I have been a night and day in the deep sea.

26. Often in journeys, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in peril from my countrymen, in peril in the city, in peril in the solitude, in peril on the sea, in peril among false brethren.

27. In labour and care, in many vigils, in hunger and thirst, in many fasts, in cold and nakedness.

28. Besides those things that are without, my daily preoccupation, the solicitude of all the churches.

22. It appears from this verse that his opponents were Jews, or Judaizers. They may, however, possibly have sought to introduce, under the guise of Judaism, heresies, which were of foreign origin. The term *Hebrews* included originally all the descendants of the patriarch Heber, who

lived at the time of the dispersion (Genesis xi., 15). I am a Hebrew, and speak the Hebrew language. The Israelites, God's chosen people, were a branch of the Hebrew race. The *seed of Abraham*, not converts or proselytes.

23. *They are ministers of Christ*, or say they are. In verse 13, he calls them ministers of Satan. It may be a foolish thing to say, but I am much more a minister of Christ than they. The proof he adduces of this statement is not, perhaps, exactly what we should have expected, for he does not refer to the cities, provinces, and kingdoms he had evangelised and converted, but to the labours, blows, and imprisonment he had suffered for the cause of Christ. I have certainly undergone toil, imprisonment, blows, peril of death, to a much greater degree than they.

24. *Forty less one* (Deut. xxv. 3). If he who has sinned is found worthy of beating, let them lay him down and beat him in presence of the judges. But the number of blows must be in proportion to the crime, and never exceed forty, lest thy brother go away cruelly torn before thine eyes. Forty was therefore the *maximum* number of stripes allowed, and the Jews never inflicted more than thirty-nine, lest they should inadvertently exceed it. There is no record in the Acts of the Apostles of this punishment being inflicted on Saint Paul, nor is it known where it occurred.

25. *Thrice I was beaten with a rod*, by the Gentile magistrates. It may be inferred that the Jews used a whip. Only one of these three beatings is mentioned in the Acts. It occurred at Philippi (Acts xvi. 22), and on this occasion the magistrates apologised when they learned that he was a Roman citizen. Saint Paul was stoned at Lystra, in Lycaonia (Acts xiv. 19, 20), on which occasion his life seems to have been saved by miracle. Of the

three shipwrecks, there is no account in the Acts ; the shipwreck at Malta, described in Acts xxvii., occurred some years later. *A night and day in the deep.* The word *sea* is not in the Greek, and Baronius thinks it refers to a deep dungeon at Cyzicus, in Asia Minor, in which he was once immured. But he has already spoken of prisons, the word before is *shipwrecked*, and the Vulgate is most probably right in saying the *depth of the sea*. Theodoret says it was in an unseaworthy boat, in which he was tossed for a night and a day. The Syriac has : Thrice I have been in shipwreck, a day and night I have been in the midst of the sea without a vessel. It is clear from these verses that many circumstances have been omitted by Saint Luke in his narrative in the Acts, which gives principally those events of which the writer was himself a witness.

26. Theodoret : Everywhere dangers are scattered in his path. Dangers in crossing and navigating rivers, at the hands of robbers, of Jewish conspirators, of Gentile persecutors, in the city, in the desert, by land, by sea. Everywhere plots laid against his life ; and this sometimes from *false brethren*, or pretending believers. For from the beginning the devil has sown the tares. The number of attempts against Saint Paul's life from the Jews is very remarkable (see Acts ix. 23 ; xiii. 50 ; xiv. 5 ; xvii. 5 ; xx. 3 ; xxi. 31 ; xxiii. 10, 11, 12, etc. ; xxv. 3).

27. The Greek has *toil and misery*. *Watching*, for prayer, preaching, labouring. Hunger and thirst for want of food and water in long journeys, in the burning heat of the summer of the south. Fasting voluntarily undertaken for religion. Cold and nakedness, from insufficient clothing in winter.

28. *Besides these things which are without*, and affect the body, there are the cares and anxieties of the mind. The Greek word *ἐπιπόρευσις* means conspiring or combined

assault and tumult; and Saint Chrysostom, taking it literally, refers it to the frequent conspiracies and seditions which threatened the Apostle's life. But he has already spoken of this in verse 26, and from the following words, *the solicitude of all the Churches*, it is reasonable to suppose he alludes to the tumult and whirl of business in which he is continually involved, and which is always distressing to a man whose delight is in communion with God. The case of all the Churches, says Erasmus, continually weighed and pressed upon him.

29. Who is weakened, and I am not weakened? Who is scandalised, and I learn not?

30. If I must glory, I will glory of what is my weakness.

31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed for ever, knows I do not lie.

32. Saint Damascus, the chief of the people of King Aretas, guarded the city of the Damascenes, to take me.

33. And through a window, in a basket, I was let down over the wall, and thus escaped his hands.

29. If any is weakened in faith or virtue, I am, in a degree, weakened too. Any scandal arising tortures me. I will glory, if I glory, not as my opponents do, in worldly greatness—he had very high prospects of worldly greatness once—but in the suffering and humiliation which I share with Christ. The City of Damascus, with Arabia Petrœa, in the division of Syria, made by the Romans among the family of Herod, fell to Aretas, whose daughter was married to Herod Antipas, the King of Galilee. Herod dismissed her to marry Herodias, wife of his brother Philip. Aretas had placed a governor in the town of Damascus. The occurrence related by the Apostle happened in A.D. 31, six-and-twenty years before the Epistle was written. It is recorded in the Acts ix. 24, 25.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

What a spectacle is exhibited to us in this brief narrative of the labours and sufferings of Saint Paul! The Legate of Jesus Christ beaten with clubs, whips, rods, as if he were a guilty and worthless slave; the herald of God's message of salvation stoned, almost to death, as a blasphemer; the faithful servant and minister of the Almighty shipwrecked at sea, tossed on the stormy waves, as if he were a wretch whom God's very providence had abandoned to death and destruction! A sight to cause scandal, if looked at with the eyes of the flesh. *Is there knowledge on high?* But edifying to the last degree, regarded with the eyes of faith. For we learn from it, not to shrink, as from real evils, from care, suffering, and humiliation, but to esteem these as precious gifts of God, which He has ready for His faithful servants. *It is given you, for Christ's sake, not to believe in Him only, but also to suffer for His sake.* And we learn not to shrink from and avoid the ordinary ills of life, but to prefer and choose them, as sources of eternal glory; to rejoice in them as means and principles of true glory. Our life, for the most part, has little resemblance to that of the Apostles. Theirs was a life of labour, ours of ease; theirs of suffering, ours of softness and indulgence; theirs of poverty, slight, contempt; ours of wealth, consideration, pride. Yet ought we to differ from those of whom we boast as the fathers of our faith? Should we not be ashamed to suffer nothing, for ourselves, of all the Apostles underwent for us? Affliction is the mother of glory. By affliction Christ and the Apostles entered into glory. It is to affliction that God predestined us, as the means of making us like the image of His Son, that *He might be the eldest born of many brethren*; and the Cross is the inheritance He shares with us, and which it is our privilege to partake with Him.

CHAPTER XII.

1. If I must boast, this indeed is not expedient, but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2. I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not, God knows), such an one caught up to the third heaven.

Ch. XII. In this chapter the Apostle refers to the wonderful secret revelations which had been made to him, as a proof of his authority; and announces his intention to pay another visit to Corinth.

1. *If I must boast.* Under protest, and because you require this proof of my divine commission, I will tell you that I have received this wonderful favour from heaven, although the nature of the revelation made to me is not to be communicated to mortal man. So the Vulgate and the Syriac. The Greek text differs slightly. Boasting is not good for me; and Theodoret says that as the Greek fathers understand it, he means to say that my relation of this occurrence is of no advantage to myself, but may be useful to you.

Visions and Revelations. Visions may be granted without revelations, when the meaning is not understood, as to Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 17, to Nabuchodonosor, Dan. ii. 31. The revelation adds to the vision the intelligence of the meaning of what is seen. *Of the Lord*, not of the devil, who also is able to send visions and revelations. St. Thomas.

2. *I know a man in Christ.* He suppresses his own name, out of modesty. *A man in Christ.* That is, a Christian.

Fourteen years ago. He had concealed all knowledge of this wonderful event for fourteen years, and would have continued to do so till the end of his life, if the Corinthians had not compelled him to refer to it. St. Thomas thinks the vision here referred to was seen at the time of Saint Paul's conversion, during the three days when he could neither see nor eat, Act ix. 9. Baronius and modern writers calculate more accurately that it must have happened about eight years after his conversion, probably at the time he went to Antioch with Barnabas, Acts xiii. Baron. Ann. 44 and 58. See also Estius.

The *third heaven* is a Hebrew phrase for the highest heaven. We have in the Scriptures mention of three heavens; the aerial heaven, where the clouds float; the sidereal heaven, where are the planets and the stars; and the empyreal heaven, or world of the angels, into which last Saint Paul was rapt. *Whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell.* The words seem to imply that the Apostle's own impression was that he had actually been taken up to heaven in the body, but was not absolutely certain. This is the opinion of Saint Chrysostom, Ambrose, Grotius, Fromond, and others. Cornelius à Lapidè thinks it the more probable opinion that he was conveyed to heaven in the body, as well as in spirit; and Father George Ambianus is decidedly of that opinion, *De conditione raptus*. Among modern writers the more general view is that the Apostle was rapt up to heaven only intellectually and in an ecstasy, not physically or corporeally; but that the soul remained still united with the body, as St. Thomas thinks, and was not separated from it by death. As the body is said to be rapt, when violently removed from its place by an external force, so the soul is rapt when taken from the shadows and symbols on which its knowledge of external things depends, and raised to the unclouded vision and clear intelligence of the angels in heaven.

In support of the first opinion it may be observed that the

verb used in the Greek is not ἐξέστη, visited with an ecstasy, but ἀρπαγέντα, which seems to suit better with the idea of a bodily transportation. And as Saint Chrysostom remarks, it was in a sense due to Saint Paul that he should receive a favour not inferior to that which was granted to the other Apostles, who conversed with Christ in the body. As Saint Peter saw his glory on Mount Thabor, so did Saint Paul in the third heaven. And as Moses conversed with God in the mountain, before he came forth to promulgate the law, so Saint Paul conversed with Christ in heaven before he went forth as the teacher of the nations. But after all, a question with regard to which the Apostle was himself uncertain, must remain uncertain for us.

3. And I know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I know not ; God knows) :

4. That he was rapt into Paradise, and heard secret words, which man may not speak.

5. On behalf of such an one I will boast ; but for myself I will not boast but in my infirmities.

6. For though I were willing to boast, I shall not be a fool ; but I spare, lest any one esteem me above what he sees in me, or hears from me.

Secret words, arcana verba, is in the Greek ἀρρήτα ῥήματα, unutterable utterances, things so great that man cannot explain them, and transcending all power of speech. He recurs to this in verse 6. The mention of paradise suggests to some ancient writers, and among them Ambrose, St. Anselm, and Theophylact, that this is a distinct vision from that referred to in verse 2, where he says he was rapt into heaven. But it seems more probable that whereas in the heavenly vision his intellect was enlightened by the knowledge of sublime

mysteries of truth, he intends by the use of the word *paradise* to denote the sweetness and delight with which his heart was filled and overflowed. Heaven denotes the perfection of knowledge, paradise the perfection of joy. He *heard* unutterable things, because he was instructed by another, for instruction comes by hearing. St. Thomas. This doctor, as well as St. Chrysostom, St. Anselm, and St. Augustine (xii. 28 de Gen.) consider that Saint Paul beheld the divine essence in this vision; but a contrary opinion is maintained by modern writers. But the Apostle then adds, if I were able, or if I were permitted, to tell what I saw and heard, all doubts would be removed, all cavils silenced. I should not then be *a fool*. I refrain, lest you should think me an angel, or a god, like the people of Lystra, Acts xiv. 10, or the people of Malta at a later date, Acts xxviii. If they offered bulls in sacrifice when he wrought a miracle, what would they not have done, had he revealed all he knew? Theophylact. The example of Saint Paul in concealing this divine favour for fourteen years, is worthy of observation and imitation. When compelled to speak of it he does so as briefly as possible, and in ambiguous and enigmatical terms, and at once proceeds to record the humiliation that followed. God's gifts are secret. If compelled to speak, say as little as possible, and recur at once to thy own nothingness.

7. And lest the greatness of the revelations should lift me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me.

8. On account of which I thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart from me.

9. And he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for virtue is perfected in infirmity.

The Apostle here changes the person, and shews that he has been speaking of himself. Should lift *me* up. For he also was human. Theophylact. The *sting* is in the Vulgate *stimulus*, in the Greek σκόλοψ, which, according to Grotius, signifies a thorn, according to Erasmus a sharp stake. A *stimulus* is properly a stake shod with iron to drive oxen when at work. This affliction Saint Paul ascribes to Satan, but nevertheless says it was *given* to him by the overruling goodness of God. The verb rendered buffeted, or bruise, might either infer pain or humiliation, or both together. As to the nature of this infliction, there is great variety of conjecture among ecclesiastical writers. The Greek fathers, Saint Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact, and Ambrose among the Latins, think it signifies persecution from enemies of the faith, urged on by the Devil. This is also the opinion of Erasmus. F. George Ambianus, quoted by Grotius, thinks it was an acute pain in the head or ears. Saint Thomas, that it was a painful disorder of the intestines. Some of the authorities cited by Cornelius à Lapide consider that it was a weakness of the stomach; others that the devils assailed him literally with blows and violence, as in the case of Saint Antony. The modern opinion now most commonly received is that it was a motion of concupiscence suggesting impure ideas to the imagination, and exciting rebellion and tumult in the flesh. In support of this latter view there is urged, 1, the metaphorical terms in which the Apostle describes it; 2, he says it was in his *flesh*, which hardly agrees with persecution from without; 3, it was occasioned by an angel of Satan, which would scarcely have been said of any ordinary form of disease; 4, the word *colaphizat* seems to imply humiliation; whereas persecution for God's sake brings glory, and disease inflicts pain, not shame; and 5, if it had been persecution or disease, he would not so earnestly have prayed for deliverance from it. Erasmus rejects the idea altogether, as unworthy of so great a man, and one so far advanced in age. (Hammond, *in loc.* suggests that the

affection referred to by Saint Paul was an affection of the eyes, which impaired his sight, and from which there are other grounds for believing that he suffered. He dictated all his epistles to an amanuensis, adding only a few words in his own handwriting at the end, for identification, and these written in very large characters. You see in what large letters I write in my own hand, Gal. vi. 11. In support of this conjecture it may be observed that he refers to his infirmity as if it were already well known; and if it were of the kind suggested above, and known only to himself, it seems hardly likely that he would have alluded to it at all; while the urgency with which he prayed for deliverance would imply that it was something he thought likely to occasion hindrance to the exercise of his ministry).

I besought the Lord thrice. Doubtless at these different oblations of the Holy Sacrifice. But Saint Chrysostom thinks that *thrice* means simply *often*. That it, that is the angel of Satan, might leave me. The prayers of the just are often heard, when not heard; heard for their good, unheard for their wishes. God is good, and often withholds what we want, to give what we want still more. St. Jerome. The patient under the knife will call out for mercy, but the operator does not listen. St. Augustine. *Virtue is made perfect in weakness.* *Virtue* is not here opposed to *vice*, but to *weakness*. The Greek has *my power*. The power of God is shown forth most conspicuously through the infirmity of man.

9. Willingly therefore I will glory in my infirmities, that the virtue of Christ may dwell in me.

10. On that account I please myself in my infirmities, in insults, in destitution, in persecutions, in distress for Christ: for when I am weak, then am I powerful.

11. I am become a fool : you have compelled me : for I ought to be commended by you ; for I am in nothing inferior to those who are Apostles beyond measure : though I am nothing.

12. Yet the signs of my apostolate were done upon you in all patience, in signs, and miracles, and powers.

Since the power of Christ is most manifest in the weakness of man, I will willingly glory (the Greek text has, I will most willingly glory more) in my infirmities, whether of nature or coming upon me by God's permission from without, than in the fullness of divine revelation which has been accorded me, because the power of Christ *dwells in me* ; according to the Syriac, overshadows and protects me. And this being the case, my own weakness and infirmities, the insults to which I am exposed, the poverty and destitution in which I live, the persecutions I endure, the troubles and perplexities I undergo, all for Christ's sake, are to me actually a source of joy and pleasure, because through all these things the power of Christ, which dwells in me, is more conspicuously manifest. And if in saying this I have used language which sounds like boasting, this is your fault. It is you who have compelled me, for I have only done what you ought to have done for me. It was for you to stand up for me, your Apostle. In no sign or character of the Apostolate am I inferior, I will not say to the heretical teachers who are endeavouring to mislead you, and constantly depreciating my work, but even to the first and greatest of the Apostles of Christ. You have compelled me to make this assertion, not for the sake of my own dignity, but out of regard to your salvation, which is imperilled by the false teachers to whom you listen. Saint Anselm thinks the words *supra modum apostoli* refer to St. Peter, St. John, and St. James ; and the Syriac has *the very great Apostles*. The first

character of the Apostolate mentioned by St. Paul in verse 12 is *patience*, the suffering persecution and poverty for Christ's sake. The second is the exercise of miraculous powers, which he distinguishes into *signs*, *miracles*, and *powers*, greater, lesser, and more ordinary. You know this, and you ought not to have left it to me to assert and defend my apostolic commission, and you might have spared me the necessity of doing so.

13. For what is there that you have had less of than the other churches, except that I personally put you to no expense? Forgive me this wrong.

14. Behold, this third time I am prepared to come to you : and I shall not burden you. For I seek not what is yours, but you. For sons should not lay up treasure for their parents, but the parents for the sons.

15. But I will most willingly spend and then be spent myself for your soul ; though the more I love the less I may be loved.

16. But be it so ; I did not burden you : but as I am crafty, I caught you by artifice.

17. I requested Titus to go to you, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus cheat you? Did we not walk in the same spirit, in the same footsteps?

Other churches, planted in other places by other Apostles, have enjoyed no privileges you have not equally received, whether in the full announcement of the truths of the Gospel, or their confirmation by miracle. The only difference in your case is that whereas the other Apostles usually accept offerings for their maintenance and expenses, I would not do so at Corinth. St. Paul's motive for acting in this way possibly arose from the condition of pagan society at Corinth,

to which he preferred not to be, even indirectly, under any obligation. This resolution to live at my own expense, he adds satirically, is an injury which I should think you might easily forgive. It is to be wished that all Christian missionaries were, like St. Paul, chargeable with no other error than this.

This third time I am prepared to come to you. Saint Paul had in fact only visited Corinth once, but he had intended to do so a second time a few months previously, and was prevented by circumstances. On this account he says, I am coming the *third* time. See i. 15-17 of this Epistle. But when I come I shall continue to live at my own charge, and cost you nothing. For, he adds, what I seek is not your goods, but yourselves; *not yours, but you.* An apostle is a fisher of men, and a hunter of souls. The words are intended to soften his sarcasm in verse 13. There may also be an allusion to the heretical teachers, as if he would imply that they apparently acted on a different principle. I am in the place of your father; and would gladly give all I have for you, and my life at last; and this with the ardent and disinterested affection which seeks no return; *though the more I love, the less I may be loved.* He proceeds to reply to a most ungrounded calumny brought against him by his opponents at Corinth, who could not deny that he lived there at his own expense, but they asserted that he only did so ostensibly and in pretence, and meanwhile surreptitiously accepted contributions collected by his agents. Titus and Luke (see viii. 18) came to you at my request; did either of these act or teach in any way differently from myself? We were all animated by the same spirit, and followed the same course of life.

19. Do you still think we are excusing ourselves to you? Before God and in Christ we speak; but all, most beloved, for your edification.

20. For I fear lest perhaps when I come I shall not find you such as I wish, and may be found by you such as you wish not.

21. Lest there be among you contentions, emulations, animosities, dissensions, detractions, whispers, inflations, seditions ;

22. And that when I come again God may humble me among you ; and I may have to mourn for many of those who sinned before, and have not done penance for the uncleanness and fornication and immodesty which they have done.

Are you still unconvinced, and inclined to ascribe all I have said to the solicitude of a guilty conscience, as if I was anxious to clear myself in the sight of men ? Am I a defendant on trial, trying to find excuses for myself ? The Vulgate begins verse 19 with *olim putatis*, as if the translator had read *πάλαι* in the Greek, but the present text has *πάλιν*, which seems to give a more intelligible meaning, as above. The Syriac has *do you still think ?* Yet surely you may trust me when I speak, as I now speak, in presence of God, who sees the heart, and in the spirit of Christ, which is sincerity and truth. All I have said, I have said not for my own glory, or in my own defence, but for your edification ; from desire for your salvation, fear for your danger of falling from the faith. I fear that I shall not find the faults corrected, which I have pointed out ; that you will find in me a severe judge, rather than a kind and loving father. The faults are those I endeavoured in the former epistle to correct ; verbal controversies, personal rivalry, angry feelings, calumnious charges, party spirit, discord, pride, tumult, sedition. This is not all, nor the worst ; I am afraid I shall find, to my grief and humiliation, many persons whom I have been compelled to censure for an openly flagitious course of life, persisting

in their wickedness, and refusing to do penance. Ambrose remarks that this passage proves, against Novatian, that fornicators might, in the days of the Apostles, be admitted to penance.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Certainly it is disappointing to find Saint Paul, carried up to the third heaven among the holy Angels, admitted to the joys of Paradise, and this, as he himself thought probable, in bodily presence as well as in spirit, unable or not permitted to reveal to us the great and glorious things he heard and saw. Both because it would have given him a more powerful and effectual argument in his controversy with his opponents; but still more, because for our own sake we cannot but wish to know what he knew, and hear what he heard. But for some reason, it cannot be so. The words he heard were unutterable by mortal lips. Saint John, like Saint Paul, was in spirit taken up to heaven, and saw the Throne of God, and Him who sat thereon. All was gleaming with splendour, with the iris of emerald above, the Seniors, clothed in white and crowned with gold, enthroned around; and from the Throne of God proceeded lightnings, and *voices*, and thunders. But what these *voices* said, he has not told us. Even in our experience of earth we find enough to prove that the secrets of heaven cannot be rendered intelligible to mortal man. Who, but a Christian, understands the motives of the Christian life? The wind blows where it will, and we hear it, yet know not whence it comes or whither it goes. Who, outside the Church of Christ, can form the faintest conception of the motives of the Religious Life? And this, the ludicrous mistakes made by Protestant writers on the subject, evidently prove. Heaven and heavenly things are an enigma to the mind which is not

enlightened by the Spirit of God. Whatever may have been the tenor of the *arcana verba* which Paul heard in heaven, they did not make him more in love with earth, nor make him less desirous to attain his heavenly home. The secrets of heaven are withheld from us, because they are too glorious for our weakness to endure. I have many things to say, our Lord said to His Apostles, but you cannot bear them now. Only eternity will be long enough to say them, only immortality strong enough to endure them. And the joy and delight of God's presence, when we are admitted to it, will come upon us as an endless, boundless, and glorious surprise.



CHAPTER XIII.

1. BEHOLD, the third time I am coming to you : in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand.

2. I have said beforehand, and I say beforehand, as present and now absent, to those who have sinned before, and to all the others, that if I come again, I will not spare.

3. Are you seeking a proof by experiment of Christ who speaks in me, who is not weakened towards you, but is powerful among you.

4. For though he was crucified out of infirmity, yet he lives by the power of God : for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God in you.

Ch. XIII. In this chapter the Apostle threatens the impenitent with the visible judgment of God, to urge them to penance ; and concludes the Epistle with his salutation and benediction.

The third time I am coming. I am certainly coming now, although on the last occasion when I proposed doing so, I was unable to carry out my intention. *In the mouth of two or three witnesses* is a reference to Deut. xix. 15. Either he meant to hold a formal judicial enquiry into the charges brought against the heretical leaders and their followers at Corinth, and obtain testimony against them ; or he used the phrase in allusion to his two or three visits to Corinth. This

last is the opinion of St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, Ambrose, and St. Anselm. St Chrysostom says: I have threatened twice, and now for the third time; you will find that I have not done so in vain. The faithful prelate will always warn before he strikes. I warned you when present, I warn you absent: when I come I will not spare. What he threatens is the visible judgment of God upon the impenitent, such as overtook Ananias and Sapphira, and the impenitent fornicator in I. Cor. v. 5. *Are you seeking proof by experiment* that the power of Christ dwells in me? The Greek and Syriac read, in continuation of the sense of the previous verse: *since you are making trial* of Christ, who speaks by me. As Christ, crucified in weakness, now lives by the power of God; so you shall find that we, the Apostles, feeble in his mortal weakness, exercise nevertheless his divine power, which will be exhibited *in vobis*, towards you.

5. Try yourselves, whether you are in the faith; yourselves make proof of yourselves. Do you know yourselves that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless perchance you are reprobate.

6. But I hope you will know that we are not reprobate.

7. But we pray God that you do no evil, not that we may appear approved, but that you may do what is good, and we be as reprobate.

8. For we cannot do anything against truth, but for truth.

I advise you not to make trial of the power of God committed to my hands; but rather try yourselves, whether you are in the true faith. The test of orthodox faith in those days, as St. Chrysostom points out, was the power of working miracles, and this test the Apostle urges his opponents at Corinth to apply. By this means you will know for certain

whether Christ Jesus—the real and true Christ, the Son of Mary, not some vague metaphysical abstraction whom you call by that name—dwells among you and in your communion. Otherwise you are *reprobate*. The word *reprobi* is not used here in opposition to *predestinati*, but to *probi*, honest and sincere ; and the reference is, according to St. Chrysostom and Theophylact, to the secret corruption of life which the heretics justified and practised. The Greek has : *unless in any respect* you are reprobate. *Christ is in you*, for he dwells not in Apostles and prelates only, but in all the faithful. At any rate *I hope you will find that we are not rejected* by Christ. The word is here applied in a slightly different sense, excluded from the grace of God. This sounds like a threat, and we may be surprised that St. Paul uses the word *hope*, with the prospect of inflicting punishment on the Corinthians in his view ; but his mind was directed to the great danger from which the Church was to be delivered, and the benefit the example would bring to so many Christian souls. It is not for my own vindication ; rather I would pray to be *reprobate* or rejected myself, if only you would sincerely turn to God. It is evident that miraculous power, such as I claim, and mean to exercise, since it comes from God, cannot be used against the truth of God, but only in support of it.

9. For we rejoice that we are weak, and you are powerful. And this we pray for, your consummation.

10. Therefore I write this being absent, that I may not when present act with severity, according to the power which the Lord gave me, for edification, and not for destruction.

11. For the rest, brethren, rejoice, be perfect, exhort one another, be of one mind, be at peace, and the God of peace and love shall be with you.

12. Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the saints salute you.

13. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

I shall be only too glad to find no occasion for the exercise of any such power, if you are strengthened in God's grace, for what I most desire is your complete restoration to true faith and sanctity. It is in the hope of this that I have used language of such apparent severity in this epistle, written from a distance, that I may be spared the necessity of acting with severity when I am among you. For God's end and object in conferring miraculous power is attained by your edification, and he did not give them to destroy. For the rest, and passing by the matters to which I have been referring, I desire you to rejoice in your Christian privileges and hopes; study daily to improve, and thus make progress towards perfection (St. Thomas); exhort, or as the Syriac reads, *console* one another in affliction or trouble, or otherwise, be consoled, for by God's help all will in the end be well; try to be at concord in your views and sentiments; and live at peace with one another. God, who is the author of charity and peace, will be with you through His grace and charity. For God is charity, and who dwells in charity, dwells in God, and God in him. He is the God of peace, both as the author and proclaimer of peace between heaven and earth, pardon and reconciliation, to men of goodwill; and because his Gospel promotes peace among mankind, and his people live at peace with one another. And the God of charity, because he is charity himself, and love continually flows forth from the fountain of his sacred heart to ours; charity between God and man, and charity between Christians to one another.

Salute one another with a holy kiss, the symbol of a holy affection. Saint Chrysostom says: We are the temple of God, and of this temple the mouth is the vestibule, because by the visible channel of this vestibule Christ enters into us

when we communicate. Therefore we kiss the threshold of the temple. St. Chrysostom. *All the Saints*, the Christians at Philippi in Macedonia, where this epistle was written.

13. The *grace* of salvation was sent us by the *charity* of God, and communicated to us by the Holy Spirit. All the elements of salvation are therefore included in this blessing. Ambrose.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

When Christ comes again, he will not spare. He promised to return, and the Church has expected the fulfilment of that promise ever since. This third time he is preparing to come, and will come in earnest. And heaven and earth bear witness against us that to spare the guilty race of man he has not yet returned. But return he will. At his first coming his bodily presence was like other men, in the weakness of mortality, his demeanour gentle and humble, and we despised and rejected him. We gave him a stable for his palace, a manger for his cradle, a cross for his throne. He came in the spirit of meekness; he will return *with a rod* (1 Cor. iv. 21). Those who have refused to believe him the Creator of the world, because he was not proud, as they foolishly and blasphemously suppose the Creator of the world ought to be; those who have thought so little of the promises he set before them, as to scoff at them and pass them by; those who have disregarded his warning that the great torrent of human life, unguided by any other wisdom than that of man, uncleansed from evil which men are only half conscious of because it is common, is hastening downwards into hell; and those who, after deliberate choice, have consciously

made their election for the ambitions of this life, or its pleasures, rather than the hope of heaven ; will find their error then, but find it too late. He warned, but they put his warning to the test. They will have their answer. Nor can they plead that they did not believe ; for the root of unbelief is in the will, and they did not believe because they would not. Those who have believed, and taken him at his word, will have their triumph then, for it will be shown that they were wiser than the wise men of this world, saw what was coming more clearly than its most clear-sighted statesmen, understood the problems of life better than its acutest and most learned philosophers. Human history had its beginning, and will have its end, in Christ ; and those who have trusted in him he will know how to save.

THE EPISTLE OF SAINT PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.

PREFACE.

GALATIA is a province of Asia Minor, bounded on the east by Cappadocia, on the west by Bithynia, on the south by Pamphylia, and on the north by the Euxine Sea. It was at one time called Gallo-Græcia, and subsequently Galatia, the dominant race among the inhabitants being Gauls of the tribe of the Senones, who crossed the Hellespont under the guidance of Brennus, after the invasion of Rome, conquered the Troas B. C. 278, were checked by King Attalus in a battle about B. C. 241, and then occupied the territory called from them Gallo-Græcia or Galatia. This is the statement of Suidas; there are other accounts of the circumstances attending this invasion, but there is no doubt the people were of Gallic origin. Galatia was conquered and incorporated into the Roman Empire in B.C. 25, on the death of King Amyntas.

The Galatians were converted to the faith of Christ by the preaching of Saint Paul. They received the faith with extraordinary zeal and devotion, wrought many miracles, and endured persecution for the cause of Christ. But after the Apostle's departure, they were led astray by false teachers, whose ostensible zeal for Judaism was possibly a mask for still more dangerous errors, and who

were, as Saint Chrysostom says, intoxicated with empty glory. These men endeavoured to persuade them to adopt circumcision and other ceremonies of the Mosaic law; and with a view to obtaining acceptance for their doctrine, began by attacking the authority of Saint Paul. They declared that he was no Apostle of Christ, but only a disciple of the Apostles, and not even a consistent and faithful one; for James at Jerusalem carried on the observance of the Jewish law; and Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, had lately at Antioch, avoided association with Gentile converts who had not received circumcision. They accused Saint Paul of inconsistency in this respect, alleging that he conformed to Jewish custom in one place and not in another, and taught different doctrines at different times according to circumstances. The Galatians, too easily listening to these false statements, were persuaded to accept circumcision and adopt the observance of days and months, seasons and years, according to the Jewish calendar, iv. 10. The Apostle, perceiving the dangerous consequences to which this error might lead, and the hindrance it was likely to place in the way of the conversion of the Gentiles, the task which God had specially committed to his hands, denounces it as nothing less than apostasy from Christ and the destruction of his Gospel, i. 7. With just indignation and profound sorrow, Saint Chrysostom says, and with burning zeal, he addressed to the Galatians an Epistle full of vehemence, as is plainly evident to every reader, from its opening onwards. He rather chides than teaches, says Saint Jerome, but chides to recal them from the errors by which they had been led astray. The false apostles had denied his Apostolate, for which reason, in the very first words, he declares that he received it from Christ our Lord, as the other Apostles did, but with this special prerogative, that he received it from Christ reigning in glory in heaven.

Then he shows that his doctrine was in complete agreement with that of St. Peter, St. John, and St. James. He gives the true history of the occurrence at Antioch, which had been perverted to his prejudice by the false teachers. Then he shows by many arguments from Scripture and the reason of the case, that the ceremonies of the old Law are insufficient and useless for salvation, and that man is justified by faith in Christ. Finally, he exhorts the Galatians to hold these truths in purity of faith and a holy life.

The argument of this Epistle is, therefore, as will be seen, not dissimilar to that of the Epistle to the Romans, and it is sometimes regarded as a compendium or epitome of that treatise, having in common with it many sentiments, arguments, conclusions, and even phrases. But there is this difference, that while in the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle proves the insufficiency, both of legal obedience, and Gentile philosophy, to effect the regeneration of mankind, in this he deals with the Jewish question only, proving the efficacy of faith and the works which follow it.

It is not quite certain whether the Epistle to the Galatians was written before or after that to the Romans. Cornelius à Lapeyre considers that there is greater uncertainty as to its date, than in the case of any other of St. Paul's writings. The Greek copies, and the Syriac and Arabic versions, assert that it was written at Rome. This is also affirmed by St. Athanasius, in the Synopsis, St. Jerome, Theodoret in the Preface to St. Paul's Epistles, and by other writers. In this case it was, of course, composed at a later period than the Epistle to the Romans, and probably in the year 60. And this view is supported by the words of the Apostle, Rom. xv. 26, *Macedonia and Achaia have resolved to make a collection of money for the poor*, which money he intended to convey to

Jerusalem, and he adds, v. 28 : *when I have done this, I shall come through Rome to Spain*. And in Gal. ii. 10 he shows that this pious errand had been discharged.

Nevertheless St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, in the argument of the Epistle to the Romans, and Baronius, tom. 1., maintain that Saint Paul cannot have written this Epistle at Rome, because he makes no allusion to his imprisonment, as he does in all the others written at that period ; and they consider that it was written before the Epistle to the Romans, at Ephesus, Philippi, or some place in Greece, in the year of Christ 58. Some modern writers place it before the Epistles to the Corinthians, in 55 or 56. M. de Tillemont is inclined to this view, though not positively. *Mém. note 42 sur St. Paul*. And the same opinion is expressed, though with some hesitation, by the author of the Analysis (*Argument*). The question must, therefore, be left undecided.

CHAPTER I.

1. PAUL, Apostle not from men, nor through man; but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.

2. And all the brethren who are with me, to the Churches of Galatia :

3. Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the present wicked world, according to the will of our God and Father,

5. To whom is glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER I. In this chapter the Apostle emphatically declares, in opposition to his unworthy antagonists in Galatia, that his Apostolical mission was derived directly from Jesus Christ : and pronounces an anathema against those who endeavoured to pervert the truth of Christ's Gospel.

1. *Apostle, not from men, nor through man.* Saint Paul's commission as a divine teacher was not derived from human authority, like that of his opponents, who could advance no other claim than their own appointment of themselves ; but derived originally from God. 2. It did not come to him through any human agency whatever, as did the appointment of St. Matthias, who was chosen to

a place in the Apostolic College by the other Apostles, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost ; and as is the case with all the prelates and pastors of the Church who have exercised their office since. It was derived from God the Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, not in his mortal life, but after his resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven, seated at God's right hand and reigning in glory and the exercise of divine omnipotence. The commission of the pastors of the Church now is divine as to its origin, but human as regards the means of its communication. This was not the case with Saint Paul, or the other Apostles.

2. *And all the brethren with me.* The whole Church of Rome, assuming this Epistle to have been written there. Saint Chrysostom notes that whereas in other Epistles Saint Paul gives his own name only, or with one or two others, he here joins with him all the Christians who were with him, the dangerous tendency of the errors he had to oppose, and the peril of the salvation of the Galatians, requiring a more formal demonstration than usual. He addresses all the Churches of Galatia collectively, because they were all infected with these errors. And he omits the usual designation, *beloved* or *holy* ; his object being to warn them that they were in danger of losing, if they had not already lost, their faith.

3. *Grace to you*, the source of spiritual good ; and *peace*, either the repose of the mind in faith, or as St. Augustine thinks, reconciliation with God. The Father is the originating, the Son the meritorious, cause of grace and of peace.

4. Christ became the meritorious cause of grace and peace to us, by becoming the victim of our sins. This statement has an important bearing on the argument which follows, which goes to show that divine grace and the peace of the soul with God are not attainable by

compliance with the law of Moses, nor can such compliance in any way aid in effecting it. Grace and peace are from our Lord Jesus Christ, because he gave himself for our sins.

Saint John tells us that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the power of the devil (1 Joh. v. 19). But the world is not evil in itself, or by any fault of its Creator ; the evil that is in it comes from the sins of men. Our deliverance *from this present evil world* is the effects of Christ's death, but it may be effected without the necessity of withdrawing us from God's visible creation, by taking away sin. This Christ did freely and voluntarily, but in accordance with the will of God, his Father by nature, ours by grace.

5. *To whom be the glory for ever.* There is no verb in this sentence in the Greek, and the article is prefixed to the word glory. The Vulgate reads *Cui est gloria*.

6. I wonder that thus so quickly you are removing from him who called you into the grace of Christ, into another Gospel.

7. Which is not another ; unless there are some, who trouble you, and wish to change the Gospel of Christ.

The Apostle, without further preface, plunges at once into his subject, expressing his horror and surprise at the change which had come, in so short a time, over the faith of the Galatians. The word *thus* is not in the Greek, and Erasmus says the phrase is absurd, but he acknowledges that it is so read by Tertullian and Saint Augustine, as it is also by Ambrose. *I wonder* : I cannot conceive how it has happened. That *thus*, after you have received God's grace, done such good works, suffered so much for Christ : and *so quickly, you are removing*. Not removed.

The use of the present tense is very noticeable, indicating that the apostasy he feared had not actually taken place, or at least was not general, though there was imminent danger of it. From the faith and service of Almighty God, *who has called you into the grace of Christ*, the communion of the Catholic Church, justification, sanctification, salvation, you are turning to another Gospel. Thus their perversion was nothing less than apostasy from God and Christ.

7. Which is not a Gospel at all, for there is but one. Those who trouble you are trying to subvert, overthrow, and destroy the Gospel of Christ. This is in reality their design and enterprise, though they disguise and conceal it by calling what they teach, the faith of Christ. The false teachers of heresy then, as false teachers of heresy always do, called the mixture of Judaism and Christianity which they had invented, and were endeavouring to get the Galatians to accept, by the name of the Christian religion. This, says Saint Chrysostom, was their craft and deceit. The nature and characteristic of the Christian faith is salvation by faith in Christ. To teach the necessity of circumcision and obedience to the Mosaic institutions, is wholly to change its nature, and subvert and overthrow the Gospel of Christ. It was not *another Gospel*, but it was a new religion.

8. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a Gospel to you beyond that which we have preached to you; let him be anathema.

9. As we have already said, I now also say again; if any shall have preached a Gospel to you beside that you received; let him be anathema.

The heretics falsely cited the names of St. Peter, St. John, and St. James, as supporting their error. St. Paul

does not name these Apostles, but by saying *an angel from heaven*, as St. Chrysostom observes, he includes all authority and knowledge of celestial things, while by including himself in the anathema, in case he changed his opinions, he also includes every earthly friendship, influence, and relation. The Gospel he taught them was true, and all the Angels, Apostles, and political leaders in God's universe, could not shake its truth. Lest he should be thought to have made this statement, which certainly is a startling one, hastily and without consideration, he deliberately repeats it in the same words. The Greek *παρ' ὧ* is rendered in the Vulgate by *præter* and *præterquam*, but its meaning is *different from*, or *inconsistent with*. Further and completer instruction on the lines already laid down is not a subject of anathema, and as St. Augustine observes, the Apostle himself expressed a wish to visit the Thessalonians to supply what was wanting to their faith (1 Thess. ii. 17, iii. 1, 2). Heretics have distorted what Saint Paul says to the Galatians, as if it conveyed an anathema against the decrees of Popes and Councils, as being an addition to the faith taught by the Apostles. But the decrees of Popes and Councils, while they explain the faith, do not cross its borders; and while they teach explicitly what Scripture teaches implicitly, they contain nothing opposed to it. If the Catholic Faith in St. Paul's days was so certain that he does not hesitate to anathematize the whole College of the Apostles, and the Angels of heaven, if they taught anything contrary to it; it is even more certain now, confirmed by the tradition of so many centuries, the innumerable miracles wrought by God in support of it, and the general consent and agreement of mankind.

10. For am I now trying to persuade men, or God?

Or am I seeking to please men ? If I still pleased men I should not be Christ's servant.

St. Paul is sensible that the anathema he has just pronounced will give great offence in Galatia. But he does not shrink. What I have said, is said because it is God's truth : I am quite indifferent what men may think of it. If my object in life was to *please men*, I should be at this moment the leader of the Jews ; perhaps their king. A servant of Christ, I should never have become. St. Chrysostom says : I am not bidding for a leader's place, nor seeking disciples, nor ambitious of your praise. I seek to please God, not men ; and if I sought to please men, I should still be a persecutor of the Church of God. There is undoubtedly here a reflection on his opponents, whose judaizing tendency was adopted in the hope of conciliating the favour and support of Jews, still politically powerful in Western Asia. The Jewish religion was at that time tolerated and fostered by the Roman laws, whereas there were many indications and threatenings of the coming persecution of the Christian Church, which broke out a few years later ; and the Judaizers sought to obtain in advance the protection and support of Jews. They endeavoured to *persuade* the Jews to countenance them ; to *please* them by advocating the ceremonies of their law. Saint Paul sought to *please God*, by courageous adherence to his truth.

It is impossible to serve God and man. The bride cannot have two husbands, nor the servant two laws. God made the soul of man for himself, and admits no rival. *Unum uni, una uni*, was the exclamation of the ecstatic brother Aegidius, the companion of St. Francis. One heart for God, one bride for Christ. At the same time, while to *please man* for man's sake is sin, to please man for God's sake is charity. *Let every one please his neighbour*, Rom. xv. 2. *I please all, in all things*, 1 Cor. x. 33. Man,

says St. Augustine, does not please to any good purpose, unless it is for God's sake, and that he may be pleased and glorified, in hope that his grace may be accorded by human ministry and agency. For in this case it is not man, but God, that *pleases*.

11. For I make it known to you brethren, of the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not according to man.

12. For neither did I receive it from man, nor learned it: but through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13. For you have heard of my conversation at one time in Judaism; that above measure I persecuted the Church of God, and fought against her;

14. And made progress in Judaism above many my contemporaries in age, in my nation, being more abundantly jealous of the traditions of my fathers.

11. The remainder of this chapter is addressed to the slander of his opponents, that he was not really an Apostle of Christ. I tell you, and wish all to know, that my Gospel is neither human in its origin, nor taught to me by men, but by direct revelation from Jesus Christ our Lord, in person. This revelation was begun at Saint Paul's conversion, and carried out in further detail in visions during his prolonged retirement in Arabia or at Tarsus.

13. I am no novice or tyro in the religion of the Jews, and am better acquainted with it, more thoroughly understand its bearings, its teaching, its inner significance, than those who are now persuading you to embrace it. The outline of my career and history cannot be unknown to you. And he goes on to remind them how, with the whole energy of his fiery nature, and acute intellect, and

pure and ardent love of all that is spiritual and true, he studied the Jewish law, under its most accomplished teachers, until he was thirty years old, and was urged, by his profound conviction of its divinity and truth, to seek to root out and overthrow the faith of Jesus Christ, as being in opposition, as he conceived to the will of God ; which he doubtless believed to be, the restitution of the kingdom of Juda, and its deliverance from the Roman power. And both in zeal against Christ, who had advocated submission to the Roman power, and in intimate acquaintance with the institutions and religious belief of his own nation, he confessedly distanced all competitors of his age and generation.

15. But when it pleased him who set me apart from the womb of my mother, and called me by his grace :

16. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the nations : at once I did not rest in flesh and blood.

17. Nor did I go to Jerusalem to the Apostles who were appointed before me : but I went away into Arabia ; and again returned to Damascus :

15. In spite of this inauspicious commencement of his career, God had nevertheless separated and set him apart, even when he was in his mother's womb, and appointed him his herald, minister, and servant, like the Prophet Jeremias, Jer. i. 5. In due time God was pleased to accomplish what he had thus fore-ordained, and *called me by his grace*, revealing his Son to him, that he might in turn reveal Him to the nations. St. Jerome thinks the revelation here referred to took place on the road to Damascus. St. Thomas thinks it was made, at least partly, during the following three days ; others consider

that it was subsequent to the visit of Ananias and baptism of St. Thomas.

16. *I rested not in flesh and blood.* The Greek, I consulted not with flesh and blood. The Syriac : I made it not known to flesh and blood. The Arabic has the same meaning. I began to preach Christ at once, without asking permission of any one, Act. ix. 20. By flesh and blood, says St. Chrysostom, he means the Apostles ; or if any one prefers to think he means all mankind, I shall not contradict. I did not go to Jerusalem to consult with Peter, John, and James, who were there at that time.

Damascus was at that period the capital of the kingdom of Arabia Petræa, and the Apostle, when he says he went into Arabia, doubtless means that he preached Christ in the neighbouring country, for three years. This is not mentioned by St. Luke in the Acts, possibly because it was not attended by any remarkable occurrence. St. Luke only says that *after many days*, that is three years, St. Paul left the country and proceeded to Jerusalem.

18. Then after three years I came to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

19. But I saw no other of the Apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord.

20. And what I write to you, behold before God, that I do not lie.

21. Then I came into the parts of Syria and Cilicia.

22. And I was unknown by face to the Churches of Judea which were in Christ.

23. But this much they had heard, that he who formerly persecuted us, now preaches the faith which once he fought against.

24. And in me they glorified God.

18. *I came to Jerusalem to see Peter.* The Greek word is *ἰστορήσαι*, to seek or make his acquaintance ; not to learn from him, says St. Jerome, but to pay honour to the first of the Apostles. Saint Chrysostom says the same. Ambrose observes that it was reasonable he should wish to see Peter, not to be taught by him, because he had been taught already by the same authority who instructed Peter, but from respect to his Apostolic office, and to inform him of the wonderful gifts and extraordinary mission he had received. He adds that he remained with Peter fifteen days, which is a proof that he could not have learned from him the religion of Christ, the time being insufficient.

19. *I saw no other of the Apostles*, none of whom, possibly, were at that time at Jerusalem : except Saint James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, the brother of our Lord, that is, his cousin, being the son of Mary, the wife of Cleophas, sister of the Blessed Virgin. Saint Luke's account of this visit to Jerusalem, in the Acts of the Apostles, is very circumstantial, and is given Act. ix. 26—30. His life being in danger, he was, by the intervention of the Christians of Jerusalem, shipped off to Tarsus, his native place, where he remained for some years, with his family and friends.

20. *Before God, I lie not.* So many false statements regarding the Apostle's life and history had been maliciously circulated among the Galatians, that he evidently considers they would have some difficulty in believing him, and accordingly thinks it necessary to confirm his own statement with an oath.

Tarsus was in Cilicia, and parts of Syria were in its immediate neighbourhood. If the conversion of St. Paul took place A.D. 31, the earliest convenient date, he must have remained nine years in this comparative retirement. He could not have met there any of the Apostles, from

whom he might have received instruction ; neither did he receive it from the Christians of Judea, by whom the heretics declared he must have been taught the necessity of circumcision and of the observance of the law, for he only remained a few days in their country, and they were not even personally acquainted with him. But they knew him only too well by reputation, as the most violent and dangerous adversary they ever had, and his marvellous conversion from a persecutor into a preacher of the faith he once assailed, filled them with astonishment and gratitude to God.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

I wonder, the Apostle says, that you are changing so soon from the grace of God to another Gospel. The same phenomenon encounters us every day, and is just as wonderful, extraordinary, and unaccountable as ever. In early youth, in the flower of their age, with all the teaching of the Church, to which they listened in childhood, fresh in their memory, all the impressions of love to God, the aspirations after heaven, of which they were once conscious, not yet faded from their heart, how many turn aside from the communion of the Catholic Church of Christ, to follow another Gospel—the pleasures, the vanities, the ambitions of the world, the cavils of unbelievers, the sophistries of heretics, the sneer of the ungodly, the snares of Satan, which they renounced in their baptism ! This is worse than the apostasy of the Galatians ; for the Galatians wandered into Judaism, but at any rate they had never renounced it. We renounce the Gospel of the devil, and return to it as soon as we are old enough to act for ourselves. It is a double treason, for we abandon Jesus, to whose service we were

solemnly devoted ; and we return to the standard of the devil, whose service we have solemnly abjured. Truly we may *wonder* : for what are the hopes this new Gospel sets before us ? A few years of pleasure, of amusement, of success, perhaps renown, and these chequered by disappointment, saddened by sorrow, poisoned by remorse. Then the bitter dregs of the cup, of which the sweetness is all gone ; the dreary retrospect of a wasted life ; the gloomy prospect of a future that is endless, and without hope. This is no *Gospel* ; and the only Messenger who ever brought good news from heaven to this earth of ours, since it became the prison house of sin, was He who brought us the glad tidings of God's forgiveness, and his grace, for this mortal life, and joy eternal in his presence in the life to come.



CHAPTER II.

1. THEN after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with us.

2. And I went there according to a revelation, and conferred with them on the Gospel, which I preach among the nations ; but apart with those whom I found to be in authority, lest haply I should run, or had run, to no purpose.

CHAPTER II. In this chapter the Apostle insists on the perfect conformity of his doctrine with that of St. Peter and the other Apostles.

1. It was one of the charges against St. Paul that his opinion on the subject of the observation of the Jewish law differed from that held by St. Peter, St. John, and St. James : and to this charge he thinks it right, in charity to the Galatians, to give a formal reply. He, therefore, proceeds to relate the circumstances of the first occasion on which he had any prolonged communication with these Apostles, which was at the Council held at Jerusalem to settle this question, in the year 45, fourteen years after his conversion ; for it is proved by St. Thomas, *in loc.* and by Baronius, tom. I., A.D. 51, that it is from his first conversion that these fourteen years are dated. The circumstances are recorded by St. Luke in Act. xv. The controversy arose at Antioch, on the arrival of some brethren from Jerusalem, who insisted that circumcision was necessary for salvation, for the Gentile converts. This was

strongly opposed by Paul and Barnabas, who had just returned from their Apostolical journey in Cyprus and Asia Minor, in which journey they had exempted their converts from any such necessity. Eventually it was agreed that these two Apostles should proceed to Jerusalem to consult with St. Peter, St. John, and St. James; which they did, with several companions, and among them Titus, as St. Paul states in the text, that he might have the support both of a distinguished Jew and Gentile. The phrase *go up*, or ascend, to Jerusalem, was a customary one, that city being on the highest ground between the river Jordan and the sea. See Matt. xx. 17, Mark x. 32, Luc. xviii. 31, &c.

2. St. Luke says it was decreed, or determined, at Antioch, that Paul and Barnabas should go to Jerusalem. St. Paul says he went *by revelation*; he had, therefore, both an internal and external call to proceed thither: on which St. Thomas observes that all the actions and movements of the Apostles were guided by an interior impulse of the Spirit of God. He went in discharge of an embassy entrusted to him by the Christians of Antioch, with regard to which he conferred with the Church at Jerusalem. This he did frequently and publicly, previous to the formal assembly of the Council, but as truth cannot be advantageously discussed in a crowd, as St. Anselm observes, he spoke privately on the subject with the three Apostles, not as requiring instruction, for this he had received from the Holy Spirit, but in order to arrive with them at a perfect and complete agreement. This prevented the circulation of calumnious statements as to any alleged discrepancy of opinion among the Apostles on this important point, rumours which, if allowed to spread, might have undone all the work he had accomplished in conjunction with Barnabas, in Asia, and seriously impeded and embarrassed him in his labours in the future. The

occurrences here related suggest these reflections : 1. No communication from God to the soul of man, however clear, should be accepted as unquestionable, until it has been approved by the Prelates of the Church. 2. The minister of God should leave nothing undone to remove obstacles likely to hinder the salvation of souls. 3. In all important questions of faith and morals the Church has always had recourse, in the last instance, as St. Paul and St. Barnabas had here, to Peter and his successors, the Vicars of Christ.

(The Council that followed was attended by the Apostles SS. Peter, James, John, Paul, Barnabas, the Bishops of Judea, the seven deacons of Jerusalem, and a body of the Christian laity as spectators and witnesses. Hammond thinks it suggested the imagery in Apoc. iv).

3. But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Gentile, was compelled to be circumcised.

4. But on account of false brethren who came in under false pretences to explore our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, to bring us back into slavery.

3. Titus, a Greek convert, who had never received circumcision, and who accompanied me to Jerusalem, was not required by the Apostles to receive that rite. The Apostles, therefore, took the same view that I did, of this question. And it was not accidental, or owing to ignorance of the circumstances, for the matter occasioned much controversy. Some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed (Act. xv. 5) warmly insisted on it. St. Paul does not hesitate to denounce these Pharisees as *false brethren*, who had obtained admittance into the Church by baptism, not with sincere faith, but with the sinister motive of discovering what degree of freedom

from Mosaic institutions the Christians practised, and to use their influence to compel them to submission to the whole law. This freedom we have *in Christ*, who at his death said *consummatum est*, in token that he had fulfilled the obligations of the law and removed them.

Heresies usually have their origin in the action of *false brethren*, pretended Christians who enter the Church under a hypocritical appearance of sincere faith, but in reality in order secretly to spread their own errors and corrupt the truth. They are detected when these errors are pointed out, for they leave the communion of the Church rather than abandon them, as St. John says, 1 Joh. ii. 19. *They left us, but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have remained with us.*

The grammatical construction of these two verses is irregular, but the meaning is that not even the arguments of the false brethren referred to induced the Apostles to compel Titus to receive circumcision.

5. To whom not even for an hour we yielded subjection, that the truth of the Gospel may remain with you.

To these Pharisees, who had invaded the Christian Church from the camp of our opponents, I never for one moment yielded, that the freedom from legal servitude, which Christ purchased for us with his blood, might remain unimpaired for you. Why, then, by receiving circumcision, have you again, and of your own accord, placed yourselves in subjection to it? The first duty of the Prelates of the Church is to maintain unaltered *the truth of the Gospel*, on which depends the eternal welfare of their people, whatever crafty and subtle arguments the opponents of the faith may bring forward in the hope of shaking it.

It is remarkable that although St. Paul would not suffer Titus to be circumcised, he shortly afterwards advised Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess, to undergo this ceremony, Act. xvi. 3. St. Chrysostom thinks he did so, because he was about to send Timothy to teach the Jews of Asia, and wished to render him more acceptable to them. Timothy entered with the circumcision, in order to abrogate it. No harm could ensue, for though the law was dead, it was not yet deadly; and the proceeding could give no scandal to the Gentiles. The Apostle showed here a due consideration of the matters in question, times, persons, and circumstances, with regard to which he followed the precept of Christ: *Be prudent as serpents.*

6. But from those who were something considered (it is of no interest to me who they were at any time, God accepts not the person of man), for to me those who appeared to be something conferred upon me nothing.

6. This sentence is somewhat involved, owing to the change of construction at the end. From those who were in highest authority in the Church I learned nothing, because they had nothing to tell me which I did not already know, from the same source from which they knew it. This is another proof of the agreement of his teaching with that of the other Apostles, for when they explained to him their view, in private conference, there was nothing to change on either side. The expression *seemed to be something* does not imply any pretence above the reality, but that they were evidently, publicly, and notoriously recognised as the Princes of the Church. The reference is undoubtedly to St. Peter, St. John, and St. James. I did not consider for one moment what they

may have been in former times. St. Peter and St. John were fishermen; St. James was very probably, like his relative St. Joseph, a handicraftsman. St. Paul was a citizen of Rome, learned in the law, a pupil of the great Gamaliel, and on a question of the Hebrew law he would not have needed to consult them. God chooses whom he will to make known his gospel to the world. He *takes the face* of no man. I regarded them as the great pillars of the Church, the firmness of whose faith sustained that of others, and revered them accordingly. St. Paul probably wished to remind the Galatians that he had himself studied the law, but adds that this gave him no superiority over others who may not have had that accidental advantage in the same degree. Prelates and priests are to be revered for what they are, not for the human origin they spring from, or the circumstances under which they began their career.

7. But on the contrary, when they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was entrusted to me, as also to Peter that of the circumcision.

8. For he who operated to Peter for the apostolate of the circumcision, operated also to me among the nations.

9. And when they knew the grace that was given to me, James, and Cephas, and John, who seemed to be columns, gave the right hands of association to me and to Barnabas, that we to the nations, and they to the circumcision.

10. Only that we should be mindful of the poor, and this, of myself, I hastened to do.

7. So far from finding any fault with my doctrine, they acknowledged that the evangelization of the Gentiles was

especially entrusted to me by Jesus Christ, as to Peter that of the Jews. For the same God who gave such power to the preaching of Peter, that three thousand Jews were converted by him on the day of Pentecost, and much larger numbers afterwards, has bestowed on me a similar power among the Gentiles. There is no reference here to official functions or jurisdiction, but only to the miraculous efficacy of the preaching of the two Apostles severally, in different fields of labour. Nor is it implied that St. Peter was the Apostle of the Jews only, or St. Paul of the Gentiles only. At a later period St. Peter preached effectually to the Gentiles at Rome, in Italy, in many countries; as was mystically foretold to him in Act. x. 13, *kill and eat*. And of St. Paul it was said to Ananias, He is a vessel of election to me, to carry my name before kings, nations, and sons of Israel, Act. ix. 15. Accordingly he addresses an Epistle to the Hebrews. But Saint Paul, being an object of hatred to the Jews, and having gifts certain to attract the admiration of the Gentile world, was especially directed to begin the harvest of souls in this new field.

9. *James and Cephas and John*. St. Paul names St. James first, probably out of respect to the relation in which he stood to our Blessed Lord, whom he represented in Jerusalem as the next Prince of the house of David. These three Apostles, on hearing all St. Paul had to tell them, and, being acquainted with the miracles he had wrought, and the numberless conversions he had effected, gave to him and to Barnabas their right hands in symbol of their recognition of their Apostolate, and their reception into the Apostolic College, by virtue of Christ's choice and appointment, with a special mission for the conversion of the Gentiles. The expression used by Saint Paul, that these three great Apostles (the others had no doubt left Jerusalem at this time, and gone into

foreign countries) *seemed* to be columns of God's Church, must imply that there was in their aspect and their language a certain charity, majesty, and dignity, the gift of the Spirit of God, which made it impossible for any one who saw and spoke with them, to entertain any doubt on this point.

10. The three Apostles took the opportunity of requesting Paul and Barnabas, who were likely to go among the wealthy and prosperous populations of Asia and Greece, then the most flourishing in the world, to collect money for the impoverished Christians of Judea. This charitable work they readily undertook, and the diligence with which St. Paul had carried it out, in Macedon and Greece, and elsewhere, is very apparent in the two Epistles he addressed to the Christian Churches at Corinth. This is an inseparable part of the Apostolic office. They divide their preaching, says Theophylact, but the poor are the undivided inheritance of the Church.

St. Paul has now given three reasons to prove that his doctrine was in every respect in agreement with that of the other Apostles, and accepted and approved as such in the Council of Jerusalem. 1. They did not require the circumcision of Titus : 2. They demanded no change or alteration in the message which St. Paul had received from Christ to deliver to the nations : and 3. They frankly and cordially received and admitted both him and Barnabas into the College of the Apostles..

11. But when Cephas had come to Antioch, I resisted him to his face, because he was worthy of blame.

12. For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew himself, and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.

13. And the other Jews consented to his hypocrisy, so that Barnabas also was led by them into this hypocrisy.

14. But when I saw that they were not walking right to the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas before them all: If thou, though thou art a Jew, livest like the Gentiles, and not like the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to judaize?

Immediately after the Council at Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by Judas and Silas, conveyed the decrees to Antioch, as related Act. xv. 30. It appears from the statement in the text that St. Peter very shortly followed them thither, possibly on his way to Rome, and the occurrence referred to then took place. I withstood or resisted him openly, Saint Paul says, because he was *worthy of blame*. The Greek is *κατεγνωσμένος ἦν*, which signifies literally *he had been condemned*. The Syriac: because they (the Gentiles) were offended in him. The Ethiopic: because they were indignant with him. The Arabic: because he was worthy of blame. St. Chrysostom, Oecumenius, Theophylact, and all the Greek interpreters, read, *he was blamed*; so among ancient Latin authors, does Ambrose, and among the more modern, Erasmus and Cajetan, though they understand the statement somewhat differently. He was not blamed by me (Theophylact, Chrysostom) but by others, who did not know that what he did, he did with a purpose. Erasmus, following the Greek scholia, understands it, *he had been blamed* by the other Apostles, for eating with Cornelius, Act. xi. 3. He had been found fault with in private, by others, Cajetan. Almost all the Latin writers, however, understand the words in the same sense as the Vulgate, *he was blamable*, or worthy of blame, and Estius, Cornelius à Lapide, and Grotius, insist that this is what St. Paul intended to say, but he uses a Hebrew idiom,

because in that language the derivative adjective does not exist. This explanation is the simplest and most obvious ; or the Apostle may mean that the Gentile converts at Antioch found fault with the conduct of St. Peter, and St. Paul himself concurred in the same view. What St. Peter was blamed for was that while he customarily associated and took food with Gentiles, without regard to what he took, as allowed or forbidden by the Hebrew law, he varied this custom on the arrival of certain legates from St. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and withdrew from this association with Gentiles, *fearing those who were of the circumcision*, that is, from an excessive regard to their scruples, which he himself did not share, fearing to give them scandal. This showed a want of due consideration, for he should have foreseen that the course he took would equally cause scandal, in a different direction. The Gentiles, it is evident, were seriously offended, and, though privately, *blamed* him. Truth, St. Thomas observes, is never to be sacrificed for fear of scandal.

13. *The other Jews consented to his hypocrisy.* This is the word used in the Greek, in which language it is applied generally to any one who assumes a character, or acts a part, other than his own. The term in the Vulgate is *simulatio*. Saint Peter was so far acting a part, as that he yielded, for the sake of others, and for motives of charity, to scruples which he did not share, or ordinarily regard. The other Jews, and even St. Barnabas, followed his example. Examples, Saint Leo observes, are more potent than words ; and an example other than good, is more dangerous in proportion to the eminence and dignity of the person who affords it.

14. *I saw they were not walking with straight steps towards the truth of the Gospel.* So the Greek. Saint Peter, and those who on this occasion acted with him, were as it were staggering from one side of the path to the other,

wavering between the Jews and Gentiles. Not walking in a way likely to conduce to the extension and propagation of the Gospel. The words addressed by St. Paul to Saint Peter were a public reminder that the course he was at that moment taking was not his customary and ordinary one. Hitherto you have lived like the Gentiles; why do you now give the Gentiles ground for saying that you are requiring them to turn Jews? As Saint Peter made no reply, that is put on record, it must be assumed that he acknowledged his colleague to be in the right, and the occurrence, which might, if continued, have led to some serious division in the Church at Antioch, produced in effect no results of any consequence, if the affair had not been maliciously exaggerated by report among the Galatians, Saint Paul's opponents adducing it as showing that he held views different from those of Saint Peter on the subject of the Hebrew law. On this account Saint Paul thinks it necessary to relate the circumstances, otherwise possibly of no great importance, as they occurred. Saint Augustine makes the remark that while Saint Paul exhibited in this affair an example of evangelical freedom and Apostolic zeal which is rare, holy, and edifying; the example of humility set by Saint Peter in accepting a rebuke from an inferior, thus publicly administered, is still rarer, holier, and more difficult. The pastor, who for the salvation of his flock willingly endured reproof, is more worthy of admiration than the reprover, and harder to imitate. Peter was silent, says Saint Gregory (Hom. 18 in *Ezech.*) that he who was first in the summit of the Apostolate, might be the first also in humility. Peter was happy in that, when in fault, he found a colleague bold enough to rebuke him, with Christian charity; Paul not less happy in a superior who accepted the rebuke with gratitude and humility.

Having so far given the explanations necessary for the

refutation of the calumnies circulated against him, Saint Paul now proceeds to the formal proof of the abrogation of the Hebrew law, which he states in the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*. St. Jerome and Theodoret consider the following words addressed to St. Peter ; but almost all other writers, and the opinion now universally received, understand that St. Paul has now done with this subject, and in what follows addresses the Galatians.

15. We, by nature Jews, and not sinners from the Gentiles ;

16. But knowing that man is not justified by the works of law, except through faith of Jesus Christ ; we also believe in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith of Christ, and not by works of law : because by works of law there shall no flesh be justified.

17. But if seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners ; is Christ the minister of sin ? God forbid.

We who have been born among the nation of the Jews, and of parents who observed the law, and who are not proselytes and converts to Judaism (as most of the heretical teachers are) sprung from heathen parents, ignorant of the law ; yet being persuaded that justification, or remission of sins is not obtainable by obedience to the law of Moses, because it is not possible for imperfect human nature to render that perfect obedience to God's commands which will satisfy the severity of God's justice, and justification is therefore only to be obtained through faith in Christ ; we, in search of that reconciliation with our Creator which is the first and last great want of every human soul, and without which existence is intolerable, have believed in Christ, to find this justification in the Christian faith. For the Saints of old who

obtained justice, as Abraham and Isaac obtained it, as Ambrose observes, not by the works of any law, but by faith in Christ.

If then, in abandoning the law, and taking refuge in the Church of Jesus Christ, we have, as your heretical teachers assert, committed a sin, and forsaken God's holy law, it follows that Christ is the minister of sin, the cause and author of our sin. For he fulfilled and abrogated the law, and substituted the grace of the Gospel, which they maintain to be nevertheless insufficient for justification. If the law of Moses is necessary for the salvation of Christian men, as they assert, Christ, who is sanctity itself, and the destroyer of sin, will be the author of sin, and we Jews, in deserting the law for Christ, have in so doing committed treason against God, and incurred the guilt of mortal sin. This is absurd and impossible. It is, therefore, equally absurd and impossible that the observation of the law should be indispensable for the salvation of Christian men.

18. For if what I have destroyed, this I build again, I constitute myself a transgressor.

19. For I through the law died to the law, that I may live to God. With Christ I am fixed to the cross.

20. And I live not now myself, but Christ lives in me. But in so far as I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.

21. I do not throw away the grace of God: for if justice is through the law: therefore Christ died for nothing.

If after forsaking the law of Moses, and proclaiming it to be abrogated, I return to it again and maintain it by preaching or example, I become a transgressor of the law

itself. Because it was the law itself which led me to Christ, and pointed to him as its completion and consummation. *A prophet the Lord your God shall raise up to you, and you shall hear him, as you hear me*, Deut. xviii. Obeying and believing this, I became dead to the law, and the law became dead to me. Henceforth, I live to God, and live to God through Christ. In forsaking the law, I have therefore obeyed the law ; in returning to it, I should break it.

19. *With Christ I am fixed to the cross.* This is the introduction of a new argument to prove the abrogation of the law, continued to the end of verse i. of the next chapter. When Christ died on the cross, he ceased to be subject to the law, which he had fulfilled. We, crucified with him by Baptism, share his death ; but we share equally the new life, and the new freedom, to which he rose. *I live to God*, for I live to him whose life I have put on, Theodoret. Christ's crucifixion and death is our life, says St. Chrysostom. The life of the graft is not its own, but that of the tree. *I live not now myself, but Christ lives in me.* Christ, the source of grace and justice, is the source of my spiritual life ; his Spirit moves and governs my soul, his will is the active principle of mine. And leading this spiritual life while still in the body, *I live in the faith of the Son of God.*

The sacrifice of Christ was his infinite charity, which extends severally to every individual soul of man. He loved *me* and gave himself for *me*. He loves, therefore, every individual of the human race, with the same charity with which he loves the human race, and would have died for each one singly. St. Chrysostom says : The Apostle expresses in these words that it is reasonable and right for every one of us, singly and individually, to return thanks to Christ, as much as if he had died for *me* alone. For he would not have shrunk from making this exhibi-

tion of charity and self-sacrifice for even a single soul, and he loves every individual of our race with a charity equal to that with which he loves all creation.

Can I then, says the Apostle, be expected to cast aside, reject, and despise this marvellous and inconceivable mercy and affection, this *grace of God*, and the salvation it has procured me ? *I reject not the grace of God*. Yet this is what the heretic teachers call upon me to do, and do themselves. He who seeks justification through the law, rejects the salvation of Christ ; for if justification were obtainable by the law, there would have been no necessity for Christ to die. He suffered and died *for nothing*. This is inconceivable and absurd. Therefore, it is the faith of Christ, and not the law, which obtains for man the remission of sins and the grace of God.

The controversy at Antioch between St. Peter and St. Paul was made the subject of a lively discussion between St. Jerome and St. Augustine, which is to be found in the letters of St. Jerome 86-97, and in the letters 8-19 in the second volume of St. Augustine's works. As a preliminary, they differed as to the period when, and the manner in which, the precepts of the old law ceased to take effect. St. Jerome recognised only two epochs ; before the passion of Christ, when the law lived, and after it, when the law became dead, and deadly. St. Augustine recognised three ; the law was living before the passion of Christ ; after the passion, but before grace was promulgated, the law was dead ; after grace was promulgated, it was dead, and became deadly. This last opinion is the one generally received ; for the old law ceased to be obligatory on the day of Pentecost, when the new law was promulgated, but did not so completely cease but

that it was capable of enduring some time longer, until the Jews could be withdrawn from it gently and by degrees. The Jews were not at once prohibited from all observance of the law, lest the law should appear evil, as if it were a parallel with idolatry, and the Jews of old be thought to have walked side by side with idolaters. Their mother the synagogue was dead, but was to be conducted respectfully and decently to the tomb.

Secondly, the two Fathers differed as to whether the Apostles did; or did not, in reality obey the law. St. Jerome, who considered the legal observances deadly after the passion of Christ, held that the Apostles did not really conform to them, but only pretended to, in order to avoid occasioning scandal to Jewish converts who adhered to observance of the law. St. Augustine, on the other hand, holding that the law was indeed useless, but not baleful or injurious, says that the Apostles observed it, but reposed no hope in it, being well aware that it was inefficacious to salvation.

Thirdly, they disputed as to whether Peter sinned at Antioch, or not? St. Jerome says that Peter did not sin in his dissimulation (*simulatione*) because he dissembled from charity, not from worldly fear. St. Augustine asserts that he sinned venially, through indiscretion; and that, by his adherence to the Jews, gave scandal to the Gentiles, inclining them to judaize with him, and think Judaism necessary to salvation.

Fourthly, they disagreed as to whether the reproof administered by St. Paul was real or a pretence. St. Jerome insisted that it was a pretence, or piece of acting, as was also St. Peter's observance of the Jewish prohibitions. St. Augustine maintains that Peter really observed the rules of the law, and that St. Paul really reproofed him. The opinion now generally received is that of St. Augustine, as more in accordance with the language of St. Paul,

who said that Peter walked not aright, and was on that account blamed, or blameworthy. This interpretation is that which has been followed in this commentary.

Nevertheless the language used by St. Chrysostom on this subject is well worthy of consideration, though it is too long to be quoted here at length. He held the same opinion as St. Jerome, and is followed by Theophylact and Baronius. In this view, St. Peter affected a pretended zeal for Judaism, in order that by means of the pretended rebuke administered by St. Paul the Jews in a body might be withdrawn from their superstitious attachment to the law; and that the whole proceeding was prepared and arranged beforehand by the two Apostles with this intent. In favour of this view, St. Chrysostom refers to the expression of the Greek text, *κατὰ πρόσωπον*, I resisted him in show or appearance; and the word used in verse 13, the other Jews *συνυπεκρίθησαν*, *consimulabant*, or dissimulated with him. Nor can it be said that this was giving sanction to lying. It was a stratagem rather than a lie, as Cornelius à Lapeyre asserts, page 396. And deeds are more, and more easily, excusable from the charge of falsehood than words. It would have been a lie, had Peter externally simulated Judaism, while secretly detesting it in his heart. But this is not imagined or assumed either by St. Chrysostom or St. Jerome, as Cornelius shows. And the last-named writer is further of opinion that St. Jerome and St. Augustine did not clearly understand, or make themselves understood, to one another, on the point they were discussing.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Jesus Christ is the author of our salvation. The Scriptures of the Old Testament prove this, for they point to

him; the astonishing miracles God has wrought in the Church confirm it, for they evidence his Divine power. There is, therefore, no room for doubt. The salvation offered by Christ is true. What follows? This: that the Christian who believes in Christ and from Christ hopes to receive salvation, has nothing to fear. God has undertaken our salvation, and is answerable for it; and in the words of Richard of St. Victor, we shall be entitled to say to him at the day of judgment, By so many signs, wonders, prodigies, possible only to your unlimited power, you have confirmed your promise, that we have no room or right to fear, and with all confidence we are able to say, Lord, if there is error, it is you have deceived us. *Who loved me*, are the words of the Apostle. *Who* loved? and loved whom? God loved the miserable creature he had made. The Lord loved the servant. The Saint of saints loved the sinner. He who himself contains all good, loved him who in himself is nothing. How, then, are we to become partakers and sharers of this redemption, in this salvation, in this love? He was crucified for us, and we are crucified with him. And how? First, by Baptism: secured to us by the charity of others long ago. We are one body with Christ, and animated by his Spirit. Secondly, by the Sacrament of Penance, by which we are washed from our sins. And, thirdly, by frequent acts of faith, of charity, and of contrition. In these ways we partake the sufferings of Christ, and sharing his sufferings, may look forward confidently to share the glory of his resurrection.

CHAPTER III.

I. O SENSELESS Galatians, who has fascinated you not to obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was proclaimed as condemned, and crucified among you ?

CHAPTER III. In this chapter the Apostle shows that the law of Moses was preparatory to the Gospel, and that salvation is obtained only by faith in Christ.

I. This verse is the conclusion of the argument begun in the last clause of verse 19 of the last chapter. The immense love of God, as exhibited in the death and passion of Christ, should have convinced the Galatians that their salvation was secured by that great sacrifice, and appropriated by faith in it. *O senseless !* is said in paternal compassion and remonstrance for their folly, not in angry reproach ; like the words of Christ, Luc. xxiv. 25, *Fools, and slow of heart. Who has fascinated, bewitched, or charmed you, as if by an evil eye.* A belief in superstitions of this character was doubtless common among the Galatians, and possibly exposed them to ridicule among other nations, but the reference of the Apostle, being only figurative, gives no authority or countenance to any supposed reality in it. He implies only that their folly and insensibility were so great that no ordinary or natural cause seemed to him sufficient to account for it. Jesus Christ hangs on the cross before your eyes ; are you incapable of learning the lesson that sight is intended to teach you ?

The Greek word *προεγράφη* is variously interpreted to mean depicted or represented in painting, which is the view taken by the Syriac and Arabic versions ; or described in my preaching, which is what is understood by St. Chrysostom and the Greek Fathers : or *condemned to crucifixion*, with his title affixed to the cross, which is the interpretation commonly given. Baronius suggests (A.D. 35) that some of the Galatians had been present at Jerusalem when Christ was crucified, and saw him hanging on the cross. In either view, Christ was, as it were, crucified before their eyes ; yet they rejected the salvation he brought them, and the free remission of sins purchased by his blood, and were looking to useless ceremonial of an abrogated law for that which God's mercy had so abundantly and so wonderfully conferred upon them.

2. This only I wish to learn from you ; was it by works of law that you received the Spirit ? Or by hearing of faith ?

3. Are you so foolish, that having begun by spirit, you are now made perfect by flesh ?

2. You know well that by Baptism, and the imposition of our hands, you received the Holy Spirit, by whose power you prophesied, spoke tongues, and worked miracles. Was it then the law that gave you this spirit, and these operations of the Spirit ? Or was it not by faith in Jesus Christ, which reached you by means of preaching ?

3. Are you then so foolish, that beginning your salvation by the reception of the Spirit of God, you seek the completion and consummation of it in carnal and corporeal ceremonies ?

Saint Jerome observes that St. Paul does not ask, *did*

you receive the Spirit by works, for he knew that Cornelius the centurion received the Spirit by works. He says, was it by the works of *the law*.

Saint Paul's love of brevity in writing is so extreme that he almost always omits the definite article, where it is not absolutely necessary to make his meaning clear, and here, as elsewhere, he speaks generally of *law*. It is certain, however, that he refers to the Hebrew law as given in the Old Testament. In the Latin, of course, the omission is not apparent.

After miracles, says St. Chrysostom, you have come down to circumcision ; after apprehension of the truth, you have gone back to types and figures ; after gazing on the sunlight, you are gone to look for a lantern ; after solid food you have returned to the use of milk.

4. Have you suffered so many things without cause ? If indeed without cause.

5. He then who gives you the Spirit, and works miracles in you, is it by works of law ? or by hearing of faith ?

6. As it is written : Abraham believed God, and it was reputed to him to justice.

7. Know, therefore, that who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham.

8. And the Scripture foreseeing that of faith God justifies the nations, foretold to Abraham, that all nations shall be blessed in thee.

9. Therefore who are of faith, shall be blessed with Abraham the faithful.

The reference to the miracles wrought among the Galatians reminds the Apostle that they not only possessed these gifts, but had also suffered much incon-

venience and persecution for the cause of Christ ; occasioned, not improbably, by the enmity of wealthy and influential Jews ; for which he is anxious to give them full credit, and soften somewhat the apparent harshness of his language. All this they would have suffered in vain, if after all they fell away from the true faith. I trust, he says, it will not be so, for if you repent and turn to God, you will receive the reward of your sufferings, and they will not be *in vain*.

5. When God gives you his Holy Spirit, and works miracles by your hands, is this by the law, or by the faith of Christ which you *heard* from me ? This is the same question as in verse 2, but it is here put in the present tense. God continues to work miracles *among you*, many of the Galatians doubtless continuing yet in the communion of the Church, and retaining their faith. The answer to the question is not given, but is understood. Certainly it is by faith, and not by legal observance : and the Apostle continues :

6. Abraham received the Holy Spirit before he was circumcised, and before the law was given, and was justified because he *believed God*, Gen. xv. So you also have been justified, in exactly the same way, by faith in Christ. The argument here is the same which is stated more fully in the Epistle to the Romans, iv. 9, &c., and shows by the example of Abraham that justification is by faith, and not by legal works. You ought to know, therefore, by your own experience, that faith, not the law, makes true sons of Abraham.

7. The Scripture *preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham*, is the phrase in the Greek : announced to him the joyful news that in him all nations of the earth would be blessed. *The Scripture* is here personified, or rather the Apostle means the Spirit of God speaking in the Scripture. The Syriac has : *When God foreknew that the*

nations would be justified by faith. All nations, Hebrew and Gentile alike, shall be blessed, for, being justified, they shall hear the words of benediction, *Come, blessed children of my Father.*

Christ said of Abraham, *He saw my day, and was glad.* The greatest joy of Abraham was that he was the father of saints and just men ; or rather, says Ambrose, that he was the type and form of all believers, and those who believe are blessed in him. For those who follow his faith, participate in his benediction. This is the more probable meaning of *shall be blessed in thee*, shall be blessed like thee by faith.

9. Believers in Christ are therefore *blessed*, for the same reason and in the same manner that Abraham was, namely by faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham is called particularly and specially, *the faithful*, because faith was his most conspicuous excellence, and on this account he is also called the Father of the faithful, or of all believers in all time. Thus at a Christian burial we pray that the holy Angels may lead the soul of the departed into paradise, and into the bosom of Abraham.

The Apostle's argument may be stated thus : Believers in God are children of Abraham spiritually, and are justified as he was justified ; but Abraham was justified without circumcision or the works of the law, and by faith, as the ancient Scriptures testify, Gen. xv. 6. Christians are therefore justified by faith in Christ. And this is the accomplishment of the promise to Abraham, that in him all nations should be blessed.

10. For whoever are of works of law, are under a curse : for it is written : Cursed is every one who has not persevered in all things which are written in the book of the law, that you may do them.

11. And that in the law no one is justified with God is manifest; because the just lives of faith.

12. And the law is not of faith: but he who has done these things, shall live in them.

13. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law; being made a curse for us: because it is written: Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree.

14. That the blessing of Abraham may come upon the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may obtain by faith the promise of the Spirit.

10. This is the negative conclusion. Faith justifies; the law does not. For those who seek justification by the law fall inevitably under the curse pronounced upon all who fail in obedience to it, or to any part of it, Deut. xxvii. 26. For complete and perfect obedience to God's law is impossible for human nature, since the Fall. And again, the law cannot justify with God, for as the Prophet Habacuc says (ii. 4) *The just man lives of faith*. And the law is not matter of faith, nor affords any exercise of faith, requiring obedience to its precepts. *The man that doeth them shall live by them*, Lev. xviii. 5, live, that is, a life of temporal prosperity, but not the true life of the soul, which is derived only from Christ by faith.

The just man lives by faith, because God is a Spirit, to be adored by man in the spirit, and faith is the highest faculty of the created human soul. And by faith in Christ, because Christ is the source of spiritual life, and spiritual life itself, to and in all his creatures. Only faith in Christ can ever bring the human soul to the exercise of its noblest faculties, to happiness and ultimate perfection. And for this perfection there is required the redemption of the soul, fully and completely, from the guilt of sin. This Christ has done, delivering us from the curse attaching to disobedience to the holy law of God, taking that curse

upon himself, and becoming, for our sakes, an object of execration to God. (*Cursed of God is every one who hangeth on a tree*, Deut. xxi. 23) as representing the accumulated guilt of all the human race. Then the curse or malediction which hung over us was removed, and *the blessing of Abraham came upon the nations*, now justified by faith in Christ, and the promised Spirit (Joel ii. 28) was at length poured forth on mankind.

15. Brethren (I speak according to man), yet the settled covenant of man, no one sets at nought or supercedes.

16. To Abraham were the promises given, and to his seed; he says not to seeds, as to many, but as in one, and to thy seed, who is Christ.

17. And I say this: the covenant confirmed by God; the law which came after four hundred and thirty years does not render invalid to the abolition of the promise.

18. For if the inheritance of law, now not of promise; but to Abraham God gave it by promise.

15. This is another argument to prove the same thesis—namely, that the justification of man is to be obtained by faith in Christ, not by the Mosaic law. God's promise was anterior to the law, and could not be affected by it. The Syriac has: *My brethren, I speak as among men*. He has just called them fools, and senseless, but he used that language affectionately, for he now says, *my brethren*. And while one time he chides, and at another consoles, he does all for their salvation. An agreement between man and man, duly authenticated, registered, and accepted, cannot be set aside as worthless, as long as it exists and is in force; neither can it be changed, or anything added to it or taken from it. Much more the solemn promise of Almighty God stands immutable

and irrefragable, like himself. The promise of God was given to Abraham, and extended to his posterity, *in thee*, Gen. xii. 3, *in thy seed*, Gen. xxii. 18, *shall all nations be blessed*. In the singular not the plural, as limiting this promise to the children of Isaac, to the exclusion of those of Ismael, because from Isaac, not from Ismael, Christ was to descend, in whom the promise is fulfilled. This promise, the salvation of the nations through faith in Jesus Christ, cannot be abrogated or rendered void, changed or altered, anything added to it or taken from it, by the giving of the law four centuries later. But it would be abrogated, if justification and salvation were given by circumcision and obedience to the Mosaic institutes, instead of faith in Christ and baptism. The giving of the law on Mount Sinai took place B.C. 1491, and the computation of the Apostle would place the date of the promise to Abraham in B.C. 1921, the year usually assigned for the original call of Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, which is the date St. Paul probably had in his mind. If *the inheritance*, or hereditary and traditional promise of benediction, justification, eternal salvation, were afterwards made dependent in its fulfilment upon obedience to the law of Moses, the promise would not have been made good. This cannot be the case; God gave it to Abraham by promise, and the promise was that the nations were to obtain salvation by faith in Christ.

In deferring the execution of this promise to a later period of the world's history, the Almighty did not act inconsistently with his own love and affection for the lost race of man, afterwards so conspicuously displayed in the incarnation and death of Christ, because from the beginning he promised it, and confirmed his promise with an oath. By the promise, as by its subsequent fulfilment, he earned beforehand a title to the adoration and gratitude of mankind. The faith, confidence, and affection of

mankind are therefore due to him. Faith and obedience are the attitude of the soul, due from the creature to the Creator. And if we are not likely to be called upon to shed our blood for our faith, we can at least shed our faith over all we do.

19. What then is the law? It was enacted on account of transgressions; until the seed came, to whom he had promised, and ordained by angels, in the hand of a mediator.

20. And a mediator is not of one; but God is one.

This is an anticipation of the objection that if the law does not affect in any way the promise made to Abraham, or invest the fulfilment of that promise with any conditions, why was it given? To what purpose does it serve? is it worthless and useless? And in reply to this question the Apostle takes occasion to notice incidentally, though in reality it is the more important aspect of what he has to say, four particulars in which this grand, eternal, universal promise is more excellent than the law which followed it. The law, he says, was given, the Greek has *added* or *appointed in addition, on account of transgressions*; to restrain and curb the vicious and irregular inclinations and propensities of the people of Israel, consequent on their long residence in Egypt, *until the coming* of Christ. For otherwise they might have sunk into the same degeneracy as the nations round them, and the fulfilment of the promise, which depended on the birth of Christ of an Immaculate Virgin, sprung from a holy race, might have been gravely imperilled, if not frustrated and prevented. St. Augustine interprets the words *on account of transgressions* to mean in order to multiply transgressions, that having been its effect, as St. Paul shows

in the Epistle of the Romans. But this signification of the words, though verbally different from the former, amounts to very much the same thing in the end ; for any law which revealed the sanctity of God, and the nature of the obedience he required, must have the double effect, on the one hand, of acting in a large degree as a restraint on the faults and vices of the nation to whom it was given, while on the other hand it would reveal to their apprehension much evil which they had not known or suspected to be such, or would soon have forgotten or become indifferent to, under the influence of bad examples around them, and would therefore probably multiply cases of conscious transgression of the divine law.

Saint Paul has, therefore, so far, established two particulars in which the promise to Abraham is shown to be an infinitely grander and nobler thing than the law of Moses. First, the law is occasional and accidental, introduced only for the furtherance of the fulfilment of the promise, to which it is subsidiary and subservient ; while the promise is original, universal, the dispensation of God's great purpose for the redemption of the world from the beginning of its history. Secondly, the law is temporary, to last only until the coming of Christ, which it was designed to facilitate and prepare the way for ; but the promise is unlimited and eternal, and the blessing it foretold is to constitute the happiness and well-being of the whole human race to the end of the world, and onward to eternity. He now adds two others. The law was *ordained by angels*. This was well known by tradition to the Jewish people, and St. Stephen said, *you received the law by the ordinances of angels, and have not kept it*. An angel was the representative of the Almighty on Mount Sinai, but he was doubtless not alone. *The Lord came with tens of thousands of holy ones*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. But the promise was given to Abraham directly from the mouth of

God, or by an internal voice speaking to the heart of the patriarch, and there is no mention made of the intervention of any angel, Gen. xii. 3. In the repetition of the promise, and extension of it to the seed of Abraham, Gen. xxii. 15, it is indeed said that *the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven the second time*. The first time was shortly before, when he stopped him in the act of slaying his son. But even here the angel did not directly represent the Almighty, as on Mount Sinai; he only delivered the message, with the words, *By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord*. The communication thus made could not be said to be made *by the ordinance of angels*, nor could an angel promise Christ. The promise came, as before, from the mouth of God, though it was delivered by angelic ministry.

Lastly, Saint Paul points out, as the great and crowning difference and super-excellence which distinguishes the Promise and the Law, that the law was given *in the hands of a mediator*, namely Moses. The promise was given by God directly to Abraham, without any mediator whatever. And this, as the Apostle proceeds to point out in verse 20, marks a radical difference and distinction in the character of the two dispensations respectively. For a mediator is *not of one*; that is, he is a negociator between two parties. The result of his mediation or negotiation is a covenant or agreement between those two parties. And one of them, at least, must be human, and subject, therefore, to the imperfections and conditions of mortality. God may be one party to the covenant, but man must be the other, and man is constitutionally changeable, irresolute, not to be depended on. Every agreement or covenant to which man is a party must always contain some elements of uncertainty, instability, or change. The Jews received the law by the ordinance of angels, and stood to the covenant and accepted it. But, as St.

Stephen says, they did not keep it. But the promise to Abraham was not in any sense a covenant between two parties. The patriarch had nothing to do with it, except to receive it and transmit it to the tradition of the ages that followed. God's oath requires nothing to support or to endorse it. It is like himself, *one*, eternal, unchanging, unchangeable. What God says *is*, what God foretels will be, what God promises, he will do. His promise is *one* with its fulfilment. There is *one* God who made the world, *one* promise which sustained its hope and expectation of redemption, *one* Saviour who redeemed it. *The word of the Lord shall stand for ever.*

The argument in these two verses may be summed up in this way. In reply to the question, *What is the law?* the Apostle says that the law was given, 1. *occasionaliter*, on account of transgressions; 2. *for a time*, until Christ came; 3. by the ministry of angels; 4. by the ministry of a human mediator, Moses. He replies that the Promise was given, 1. *principaliter*; 2. without limit as to time; 3. immediately, from the mouth of God; 4. absolutely, without stipulation, condition, or contingency. It follows the Promise is beyond all comparison a greater thing than the law. The promise is immutable and eternal, like its Author, the law transitory and dependent on the circumstances which occasioned it. The promise was fulfilled when Christ came, to realise it; the law was then abolished, as having fulfilled its object. It no longer binds the Jews, much less the Gentiles. Why, then, Galatians, do you seek justification in the law, when you have found this justification, and all the infinite benedictions which accompany and follow it, by faith of Jesus Christ?

The above is, undoubtedly, the general sense of the argument the Apostle endeavours to express in these two verses. The economy of words in which he conveys it,

is probably absolutely without parallel. It is fair to observe, since he addresses the Christians of Galatia as senseless, or mindless, that he certainly credits them in this passage, and in the general tenor of the Epistle he addressed to them, with a considerable share of that quick intelligence and dialectical acuteness which was a characteristic of the Greek people, and the nations who were brought under their influence.

21. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid. For if a law was given which could give life, truly by the law would be justice.

22. But the Scripture concluded all things under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to believers.

21. This is another objection. The law might be represented as the rival of, or seeking to take the place of the Promise, in that by pointing out the evil of sin, it sought to effect the regeneration or restoration of mankind, and so *against the promises of God*. St. Chrysostom, however, thinks the objection arises from what was said in verse 10, that the law inflicted a curse, from which *Christ redeemed us*. Is the law, then, in opposition to the promise? St. Ambrose refers it to the statement in verse 18, *If the inheritance is of the law, it is not of the promise*. Is there, then, an opposition of contrariety of nature between the law and the promise? Lastly, and this is probably the most simple explanation, the objection may be taken generally against the whole argument of the Apostle, that the law is only preparatory to the fulfilment of the Promise, and was only *enacted, on account of transgressions*, until Christ should come, and then would cease, as no longer required. Are the law and the promise,

when fulfilled, contrary to one another, as if they did proceed from the same God, that they cannot co-exist, and one must cease when the other is realised?

The answer is, that so far from there being any contrariety or opposition between the law and the fulfilment of the promise, both have, in intention and effort, the same object in view, that is to *give justice*, or impart to man remission of sin, the grace of God, and holiness of life. This it was in the intention of the law to further, but not within the power of the law to accomplish. No law can give life. The Greek has: *if a law had been given, which could give life*; meaning, if it had been possible to enact such a law. Had it been possible, God would have granted justification by the law. This was not possible, by any law. But by the revelation it made of the real evil of sin, and the holiness of God, the *Scripture*, that is the written law, convinced or convicted all mankind, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles alike, of sin, and *concluded* them all under the sentence of condemnation which the infinite justice of God must pronounce upon the guilty race of man. Thus it brought men to repentance, and by forcing upon them the recognition of their lost condition, and absolute dependence upon the free mercy of Almighty God, prepared them to accept the justification, or remission of sins, which he offered them through Christ. When Christ came, mankind, taught by the law, had nothing left to do but to believe in him. Thus the law, so far from being in opposition to God's great promise of redemption, prepared the way for its accomplishment.

The same thing might be said, though the Apostle does not expressly refer to it in this place, of the moral law of natural conscience which existed in the people of the pagan world. Such a law could not, any more than the law given to Moses, *give life*, or obtain remission of sin.

Rather, it aggravated sin, by bringing it into contrast with the light of conscience. Yet it pointed it out, and *concluded all things*, included the whole race of Adam, under the sentence of guilt, self-conscious and self-pronounced, and thus prepared the Gentile world, as the law of Moses prepared the Hebrew world, to look for pardon, reconciliation with their Creator, deliverance from their apprehensions of futurity, and the satisfaction of the unfulfilled aspirations of the human soul, in the grace and mercy of a Redeemer to come. Of the promise of his coming, they also had a vague tradition. In him they were prepared to believe, and to those who believed, were given, in all their completeness, *the promises* which, by God's appointment, were to be obtained *by faith of Jesus Christ*..

As pride is the beginning of all sin, so is humility, or humiliation, the beginning of all recovery from sin. So necessary was humiliation for fallen men, that God permitted the greatest of all possible evils, namely sin, that the sinner being humbled might have recourse to his only redemption, and his only Redeemer. .

23. For before the faith came, we were kept guarded under the law, locked up for the faith which was to be revealed.

24. Therefore the law was our guide in Christ: that we may be justified by the faith.

25. But when the faith was come, we are no longer under a guide.

26. For you are all sons of God through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

23. We Jews were kept as it were locked up in safe custody under the law, waiting for the revelation of the

faith. Another service which the law rendered to faith. The law kept us faithful to the true worship of God, and at least in a partial, though not complete obedience to his commands, in expectation of something better that was to come. The law held them enclosed by its terrors, as by a wall, says St. Chrysostom, and reserved them for the age of faith, by the very necessity of existence.

24. The *pædagogus* was the person entrusted with the duty of conducting children to school, and keeping them out of mischief till they were safe under charge of the teacher. He was not the teacher, but only a *guide* to the teacher. Christ is the teacher, or rather faith in Christ; the law the guide to Christ. There is no opposition or antagonism between the teacher and the guide, for both have the same object in view, neither is there any antagonism between the law and faith, one being the provision made for the safety of the pupil until the other was ready. When the preceptor comes, the guide departs, as when the sun is risen the lights are extinguished. *Faith being come*, we no longer need the guide.

26. You are now all sons, and grown-up sons, of God. As Ambrose says, you have attained your majority. How wonderfully the power of faith, St. Chrysostom says, is exhibited and developed in the progress of the Apostle's argument. He has just told us (verse 7) that faith makes us sons of Abraham. Now he says, *you are all the sons of God through the faith that is in Christ Jesus*.

27. For you, whoever are baptized in Christ, have put on Christ.

28. There is not Jew, nor Greek; there is not slave, nor free: there is not male, nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

27. *You have put on Christ.* An explanation of the statement in the last verse. You are by baptism incorporated into Christ, and in a certain sense transformed into him, and as he is the Son of God, you therefore also are sons of God. Differences of race, of conditions of life, of sex, are all absorbed, and become of infinitesimal consequence and importance, in comparison with this immense and transcendent dignity. You are all one in Christ. The Greek has there is not *among you*, or *in you*, Jew nor Greek, &c. Even types of individual disposition and character are changed, so far as is possible, in Christian people into one and the same type, which is the disposition and character of Christ. What can be more astonishing, what can demand greater awe and reverence, says St. Chrysostom, than this assertion of the Apostle, that he who once was Pagan or Jew, bond or free, now bears the likeness, not of Angel or Archangel, but of the Lord of all things, and is in himself a living representation of Christ?

29. Christ was *the seed of Abraham* promised from ancient days. You are one with Christ. Therefore you are the seed of Abraham, and the heirs of the Promise. And this is the thesis which this Epistle was written to establish.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Consider and realize, O brother Christian, the exalted dignity which has been conferred upon you. You have put on Christ, the Son of God, in Baptism. You are become one with Jesus Christ. Christ has been, so to say, multiplied and reproduced in you. You are transformed into Christ, as St. Chrysostom puts it, by receiving his likeness and resemblance. You are become what

he is. He is God's Son by nature ; you are God's son by grace. Man is made Christian, says St. Augustine, by the very same grace by which Christ was made man. We have put on Christ, says another ancient writer, that is, we are brought into the same relation in which he stands to God, we are the idea of which he is the ideal, and are become by grace what he is by his divine and original nature. We have taken Christ, as wood takes fire, says St. Thomas. What follows from this ? Evidently that you live always in memory of so great a privilege, live as a son of God must live, live as Christ lives. *What pleases Him, I always do. My food is to do my Father's will.* Christ's rule of life is also yours. *Thy will be done, in heaven and earth.* Exterioily, live like Christ, whom you have taken and put on. Let him be the vesture with which you are clothed. Let Christ alone be seen upon you, as the vesture only is seen of one who is clothed. Let his humility, modesty, gentleness, patience, be apparent in all you do or say. Compared with this splendid distinction, earthly honours and distinctions fade into absolute insignificance. Noble or humble, slave or free, all Christian men alike are one with Christ, who sits enthroned in glory at the right hand of God in heaven. You are seated there with Him, and are continually in God's immediate presence. God does not look for lord or slave in you, but sees in you the person of his Son, looks in you for the likeness of his Son. Our study, our endeavour, and our prayer should to carry Christ within, exhibit him without. Jesus, likeness of the Father, splendour of his glory, express image of his substance and person, imprint thyself upon my heart by grace, that I may bear thy image, and thy Father's likeness, and thus may he see himself and thee reflected in me, and for thy likeness' sake, have compassion on me for eternity.

CHAPTER IV.

1. AND I say as long as the heir is a little child, he nothing differs from a slave, though he is lord of all ;
 2. But is under guardians and agents, up to the time appointed by his father.
 3. So we also, when were little children, were in service under the elements of the world.
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CHAPTER IV. In this chapter the Apostle asserts and illustrates the nobility and freedom of the Christian in the Catholic Church of Christ.

1. *As long as the heir is a child.* The Apostle takes up the word *heirs*, which is the concluding word of the last chapter, in the Greek and in the Vulgate, and makes it the subject of the reflections and illustrations by which he expands and developes the idea, in this chapter. The heir when a child, and though the real possessor of all things round him, has nevertheless to be treated as if he were a servant, as regards the control of himself and choice of his movements and proceedings, on account of his inexperience of life. He himself is controlled by his guardians, and his property managed by agents and factors, under their superintendence, until his arrival at full age.

3. So we, the Jews, though heirs of the promise, were like *little children*, and treated as such. Children in intelligence, we saw only outward signs, without understanding their significance, or understanding it imper-

fectly. Children in affection, we regarded only the temporal promises of the law, the gifts of God for this mortal life. We were instructed by the law of Moses, which God gave to the world as conveying the first *elements* or rudiments of piety and religion, the alphabet of faith, the *elementa*, or *elevamenta*, as Ambrose says, the first rudiments of education: like the first lessons given to infancy. We were in bondage or service to the ritual of the Hebrew religion, not perceiving that these things were only signs of something else; and controlled by threats or fear of punishment, to obedience to the commands of God.

4. And when the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under law,

5. To redeem us who were under law, that we might receive the adoption of the sons of God.

4. *The fulness of the time.* When the time came which was marked out and appointed by God the Father, for the fulfilment of the great promise made to Abraham, and when the race of man were ready to enter upon the inheritance then pledged to them, which was to be the benediction of all the nations: He sent Christ, the promise, the benediction, the inheritance, his only-begotten Son, *born of woman*, like all other men who have come into this world, and therefore human, but with no sire but his heavenly Father, because he was divine.

Made under the law, that is born of a Hebrew mother, and therefore subject to the obligation of the law, in consequence of which he received circumcision and practised the requirements of the Mosaic institutions, by his own free will. Not to be cleansed by the law, says St. Anselm, but to set at liberty those who were subject

to the pressure of its claims. And that both Jews and Gentiles might *receive the adoption of the sons of God*. The Greek, *receive the sonship*. Recover that adoption as sons of God which was lost by the fall of Adam, and the restoration of which was promised to the sons of Abraham.

6. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying : Abba Father.

7. Therefore now there is not a servant, but a son ; and if a son, also an heir through God.

6. *Because you are sons.* Because you, Galatians, who were originally pagans and not Jews, have become by adoption sons of God, equally with those who were Jews before they received the faith of Christ, therefore God has sent his Holy Spirit *into your hearts*, that is into your souls, into which you receive the grace of God, and by this filial love you are enabled and encouraged to say to God, in Christ's words, *Our Father*. See some further observations on this subject in the commentary on Rom. viii. 15.

7. The Greek has : *therefore thou art no more a servant, but a son*. The Vulgate has the verb *est* for *es*. The spirit of God is called indifferently the Spirit of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son. The Apostle says in this place *the Spirit of his Son*, because he is engaged in proving the adoption of Christian believers to be the sons of God. The fact that the Galatian Christians had received the Spirit of God, was one that required no proof, because the miracles which had been wrought, and were even then wrought continually, among them, afforded an unanswerable demonstration of it. The Apostle's argument is that you have undoubtedly received the Holy Spirit, and that spirit is the Spirit of

the Son, therefore you have received the adoption of sons. If a son, you are an heir of God. A father will sometimes distribute to his sons, when of full age, a portion of his inheritance, as a pledge and earnest for the remainder which they are one day to inherit. God is our eternal inheritance, to be enjoyed in heaven; in pledge and earnest of which, and as a portion of it given in advance, he has sent the Spirit of his Son into our souls, the pledge of our sonship, and earnest of our inheritance, to be received in full hereafter.

8. But then indeed being ignorant of God you served gods who are not by nature gods.

9. But now that you know God, yes, are known of God, how is it you turn back again to the feeble and destitute elements, which you desire to serve anew?

10. You observe days, and months, and seasons, and years.

11. I fear you, lest haply I have laboured among you to no purpose.

8. Either in serious reproach or severe sarcasm, St. Paul describes the Judaizing superstition of the Galatians as a relapse into paganism. For your old idolatry some excuse can be found. You worshipped gods who are not gods in reality, but only in popular belief, because at that time you knew not the true God. But now that you know him, or rather are known by him (so the Greek; the Syriac reads now that you know God, and what is more, are known to God). To be *known* to God means to be received, recognised, and approved as his sons. Why, as if you had become children again, do you go back to the alphabet of your infancy, the observance of rites and customs which are weak, because they have no power of

sanctification, poor because they contain not, and cannot confer, the riches of celestial grace. These you are willing to serve *anew*, not in the same manner, but with no greater profit to your souls. Formerly you worshipped idols which had no realities corresponding to them; now you look for purification in customs and observances which have no efficacy for the sanctification of the soul. You observe the sabbath, the new moons, the feast of tabernacles, the day of propitiation, the feast of trumpets, the sabbatical year, the year of jubilee: all which the Judaizing teachers instruct you to keep as holy, and as included in the obligations incurred by circumcision. The Christian festivals are not, as some heretical writers maintain, included in this condemnation, for they are not observed with any superstitious end or belief, nor as being directly of divine appointment. They are the appointment of the Church, for objects evidently of advantage to Christian people, and tending manifestly to the promotion of devotion and piety. In the Christian calendar all days are holy. And the heretical argument is inconsistent with itself, and proves too much, for if the observation of the Christian festivals is condemned indirectly by the Apostle in this passage; that of Sunday is condemned among them, a day which almost all heretics observe as sacred.

Paganism is spoken of by St. Paul as a condition of *ignorance* and *slavery*. You were ignorant of God; you did service to imaginary gods who do not exist in the universe. The faith of Christ is a condition of *light* and *freedom*. But on this account the relapse into sin is evidently graver and more serious in the Christian, than in the pagan.

II. *I fear for you.* The Apostle's love and affection for the Galatian Christians was tossed on the waves of anxiety. He fears and trembles for their salvation. St.

Chrysostom. *Lest haply I have laboured in vain.* The gravity of the danger consisted in this, that since the new moons, and sabbaths, and other similar observances, were never alleged to be appointed by Jesus Christ, or by his authority, the observance of them indicated that the Galatians reposed only a partial trust in Christ, if they reposed any at all, and looked for sanctification and salvation to another religion and another system. The object of the teachers in whom they had placed their confidence was plainly to withdraw them altogether, if possible, from the faith of Christ. They were becoming Jews instead of Christians, and might as well have remained pagans, as far as regarded any advantage to their spiritual state. But, as St. Chrysostom observes, he says *if haply*, not to drive them to despair. He says not, *I have laboured in vain* (Is. xlix. 4), but *I fear lest I have*. The ship is not wrecked, but I see the tempest rising; I fear, I despair not; it is still within your power to correct the evil, to sail forth again into smooth waters, and find refuge from the storm.

12. Be as I, because I as you. Brethren, I beseech you, in nothing you have injured me.

13. And you know that through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel to you long ago, and your temptation in my flesh.

14. You despised me not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.

15. Where then is your beatitude? For I bear my testimony to you, that if it could be done, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.

16. Then am I become an enemy to you, telling you the truth?

Lest I should have laboured among you in vain, I

entreat you now to follow the example I have set, and abandoning the Jewish observances, assert your Christian freedom as I have done. I have left the wrecked ship and swum to shore, do you also the same. There have been suggested other explanations of these words, but the above is the most simple and natural one. Do not think, he adds, that I write in anger, under a sense of injury. You have done me no wrong.

13. Not only have you done me no wrong, but when I was among you, you exhibited extraordinary kindness and charity towards me. I must have appeared to you, being subject to slander and persecution, vile, abject, miserable; one whom you could have reasonably overlooked, neglected, and despised. The *infirmity of the flesh* referred to was the poverty of his surroundings, in which the Apostle was then placed, or else the weakness of bodily presence, and what the prejudiced or unobservant took for deficiency of eloquence, remarked by his opponents at Corinth, 1 Cor. ii. 3, 2 Cor. x. 1, 10. *Your temptation in my flesh* is another reference to the same thing, as interposing a difficulty in his reception by the Galatians. The present Greek text has *my temptation*, but the reading of the Vulgate, which is more intelligible, is confirmed by the Syriac version.

14. Yet you did not despise or spurn me. On the contrary, you received me as if I were an angel from heaven, or Christ himself, and testified the most extreme joy and satisfaction at my presence, on account of the message of reconciliation with God which I brought you.

15. Where is this joy and enthusiasm vanished to? For I declare my belief that you would have pulled out your eyes and given them to me, as more precious to you than sight, if it could have done me any good. Why has this confidence and affection been changed into suspicion

and dislike? The Greek text has *what is your beatitude*, but the Syriac reads as the Vulgate.

16. Can it be that I am become an enemy to you, or come to be regarded as your enemy, because I have told you what is true? Or is it not rather, that others have studiously laboured to bring me into suspicion, and prejudice your minds against me, with a view of depriving you of the faith I taught you?

17. They seek you earnestly, not well, but they wish to exclude you, that you may seek them.

18. Seek earnestly the good in what is good always, and not only when I am present with you.

19. My little children, of whom again I am in labour, until Christ be formed in you.

20. But I wish I were with you now, and could change my voice, because I am confounded in you.

Your teachers leave no stone unturned, move heaven and earth, to effect your conversion to their views, and obtain their confidence. But this is not with any good motive, nor zeal for your spiritual advantage, but in the desire to detach you from me, and shut you out from the faith and communion of the Catholic Church, that you may become followers of them, for their own aggrandizement and renown. This sort of restless activity has been a characteristic of teachers of heresy in all ages.

18. Follow earnestly and zealously the counsels of a good and faithful teacher, but only when he guides you to what is good, not when he leads you into heresy. The Greek text reads the introductory words of this verse as a general proposition. *It is good*, reasonable, and salutary, zealously and earnestly to attach yourselves to your religious teachers, but only in what is good. And it

would be irrational to follow his advice only when he is present to give it, for if it is sound, it is equally excellent and obligatory in his absence. You were once zealous adherents of the doctrine I taught you : why should my absence make any difference in your attachment to it, if it was sound and true ? The Apostle here states the three conditions indispensable for zeal on behalf of a religious teacher, that it may be just and salutary : the teacher must be good and faithful ; he is to be followed only in what tends to good ; and in these cases, the attention paid to his instructions should be constant and unwavering, not affected by his presence or absence.

19. In writing to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iv. 15, Saint Paul claimed to be their spiritual father, because he had converted them to the faith. He calls himself the mother of the Galatians, whom with many pangs, sorrows, and troubles he had brought to the birth. A literal birth is only once ; but now he had all this sorrow and anxiety over again, and laboured in delivery of them once more. *Until Christ be formed in you*, for Christ, or Christ's faith, is the form and life of the soul. *The just liveth of faith.*

20. I earnestly wish I could return and see you again, to know more accurately your condition of mind, that I might adapt my words to the state in which I find you, and address to you warning or encouragement, as the case may require. Perhaps there is further reference to the metaphor of the last verse, for a mother will *change her voice* in addressing her young child, according as it requires for the moment blame or praise. *I am confounded in you.* The Greek : *I have lost my way in you.* The Syriac : *I am amazed in you.* I am in doubt how to write to you, whether as still Christians and Catholics, or as having already deserted Christ for heresy.

The prelate is the *mother* of his flock. All his life he is bearing them to Christ. He must alternately pray,

entreat, lament, argue, reprove for the advancement and perfection of his subjects. Patience and perseverance are requisite for this, and will do all. The Blessed Virgin brought Christ forth, without the pains of labour; but the preacher must bring forth children to Christ with toil, and pain and suffering, that he may form in his people the spirit and faith of Christ, accommodating his words to the disposition and condition of his hearers, but all with charity, like the varying accents of maternal affection, to bring forth souls to Christ.

21. Tell me, you who would be under the law, have you not read the law?

22. For it is written; that Abraham had two sons, one of a maid-servant, and one of a freewoman.

23. But he who was born of a maid-servant, was born according to the flesh: and he who of the free, through the promise.

24. Which is said in allegory. For these are the two Testaments; one indeed in Mount Sina, generating to bondage, which is Agar.

25. For Sina is a mountain in Arabia, which is joined to that Jerusalem which is now, and serves with her sons.

26. But that Jerusalem which is above, is free, who is our mother.

Since I do not know, at this distance, your disposition towards me, or how far you are prepared to listen to what I say, tell me at least, you who are so anxious to be under the control of *the law*, have you not read it, the law to which you defer? The Greek, *heard it*? For it is written in *the law*, Gen. xxi. 15, xxi. 2, that Abraham had a son by Agar, and another by Sara. Agar was young, and fit to

become a mother, and in the birth of her son there was nothing remarkable, or beyond the ordinary course of nature. Sara was old and sterile, and the birth of Isaac was supernatural and miraculous, in fulfilment of *the promise* God had made to him long before. But these facts, beyond their historical sense, have a higher and figurative meaning, contemplated and intended by the Holy Spirit, who dictated these inspired and ancient records. These two mothers are the Old Testament, or covenant, and the New. One in, or (in the Greek) *given from* Mount Sina in Arabia, has brought forth the Jews, under the yoke of the law, serving God, but doing so as slaves, and for fear of punishment.

In verse 25 the Greek text reads : Agar is Mount Sina in Arabia ; and so the Syriac. The name *Agar*, on the testimony of St. Chrysostom and Theophylact, is the Arabian appellation of Mount Sina, and is therefore an additional illustration of the allegory ; and Grotius says the mountain, or the region in which it rises, is so called because it contains the town of Agar, or Agara, for which statement he cites Pliny, Dion, and Strabo. Hence the term *Agarenes*, Ps. lxxxii. 7.

Mount Sina is distant from Jerusalem twenty days' journey, and is therefore only figuratively *joined* to Jerusalem. The Greek text and all the interpreters have *corresponds with*, or *answers to*. The Jerusalem which now is, is a slave, like Agar, and can only be the mother of slaves. *She serves with her sons.*

26. Sara is a figure of the New Testament, or of the Church of Christ, a statement which, as being obviously implied, and therefore unnecessary, the Apostle has omitted. This is *the Jerusalem which is above*, or on high. *I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, descending from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*, Apoc. xxi. 1., because the Son of God, descending from

heaven, founded the Church on earth. Jerusalem signifies the vision of peace. *Peace I leave to you, my peace I give you*, Joh. xiv. 27. This Jerusalem is *free*, bearing children to freedom, by the spirit of adoption of sons, by which we cry Abba, Father. Lastly, she is the fruitful *mother of us all*, Jews and Gentiles. Lift thine eyes all around and see; these all are assembled and come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall spring up at thy side. Then shalt thou see, and overflow, and thy heart shall be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea shall be turned unto thee, and the might of the nations has come to thee. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? (Is. lx. 4, 5, 8.) Thy deserts, and solitudes, and the land of thy ruin, shall be too narrow for its inhabitants. And the sons of thy sterility shall say in thine ears: the place is too narrow, give us space to dwell. And thou shalt say in thy heart, Who has begotten me these? (Is. xlix. 19, 20.)

27. For it is written; Rejoice sterile one, who bearest not; break forth and cry, thou who dost not bring forth children; for many are the sons of the forsaken, more than of her who has a husband.

28. And we, brethren, like Isaac are sons of promise.

29. But as then he who was born after the flesh persecuted him who was born after the spirit, so also now.

30. But what says the Scripture? Cast out the maid-servant and her son; for the son of the maidservant shall not be heir, with the son of the free.

31. Therefore, brethren, we are not sons of the maid-servant, but of the free; for with this liberty Christ has made us free.

27. *For it is written: Is. liv. 1. The sterile one and the*

forsaken is the Gentile world, which before the coming of Christ brought forth no fruit to God. *She who has a husband* is the synagogue, and the prophecy implies that the children of the Catholic Church would be beyond all comparison more numerous than the Jewish nation, a prediction which had only begun to be fulfilled when these words of Saint Paul were written. The Apostle proceeds to give three applications of his parable.

28. We, like Isaac, are the *children of promise*, the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham that in him, and in Christ, who was to descend from him, all nations should be blessed. This the Jews cannot claim, for the benediction of all nations is through Christ alone; any more than Ismael could claim it of old.

29. *He who was born after the flesh persecuted him who was born after the Spirit.* The words referred to in Gen. xxi. 9, are, *Sara saw the son of Agar the Egyptian playing with Isaac her son.* This is variously explained as a quarrel about the inheritance, in which Isaac, as the younger, would of course be worsted; or that Ismael mocked at the piety of Isaac; or that Ismael had made gods of clay, after the Egyptian fashion, and endeavoured to induce Isaac to worship them; or by other conjectures. It was undoubtedly persecution, corporal or spiritual, and stands for a figurative representation of the persecution of the early Christian Church by the Jews. *So also now.*

30. *What says the Scripture?* Gen. xxi. 10 : *Cast out the maidservant and her son.* This is the third and principal application of the allegory, and signifies the exclusion of the synagogue and the unbelieving portion of the Jewish nation from the communion of the Church of God, into which admittance can be found only through faith in Christ. The Galatians could not but see that the synagogue being cast out, or repudiated, they had reason to dread the loss of their inheritance, like Ismael, if by

persisting in legal observances, they made themselves children of the synagogue, and therefore slaves.

31. You therefore, Galatian Christians, are not sons of the synagogue, nor bound to the rites and obligations of the Jewish law; but to the commands of God, as your Father, and the precepts of the Church of Christ, your spiritual mother, who is *free*. And this freedom we owe, not to merit of our own, but to the grace of Christ, who by his passion and death has emancipated us from the yoke of that law which, in fulfilling, he has abrogated and done away with.

It may be observed, with reference to this allegory, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament have throughout a prophetic reference to the New, and are intended to be read with that fact in view. This prophetic meaning was doubtless not always known to the ancient writers, who could not have had within their mental vision the whole series of the events of future times; but it was known to, and intended by, the Spirit of God, who inspired and dictated the sacred records. Neither is it confined to such notices and references to the Old Testament as the writings of the New Testament contain; for the whole of the ancient narrative is full of such applications, which may often be found by those who look for them diligently, and are sometimes striking and startling. Nevertheless, this imposes upon students of the Old Testament the obligation of carefully observing that these typical correspondences and coincidences are to be found and noted for edification only, and as probable and reasonable conjectures, and are never absolutely certain, except where they are confirmed by the authority of Christ, or the sacred writers of the New Testament, or other writers of approved authority. Subject to this caution, any reader can find many for himself, or study with profit and pleasure those which have been collected by Catholic

writers. The acts and proceedings of the patriarchs, kings, and leaders of the ancient people of Israel, very often have this prophetic character, and the incidents in their lives which have not, are generally omitted in the sacred narrative, in which many are inserted which, but for this prophetic reference, would not seem to be greatly important; such as the comparatively trivial incident of Esau's pretending to sell his birthright for pottage.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

We are not children of the bondslave; we are children of the free. The first statement was what it was most important for St. Paul to impress upon the Christians of Galatia, eighteen hundred years ago, in consequence of the errors of their belief; the second is the more interesting to us. We are children of God, and of our mother, the Church. Be followers of God, as beloved children, and walk in love. We love God as our Father, and from love obey him, and look forward to, and long for, as our promised inheritance, the things that are spiritual, celestial, eternal, and divine. Yet, even now, says St. Anselm, there are to be met with those who seem to be born after the flesh, and love above all things else the things of time. Such are children of the Old Testament, transplanted into the days of the New. Children of the bond-slave, they too often persecute the lovers of celestial things, whose hopes are fixed upon things eternal, and who are the children of the Free. *As then*, says the Apostle, *so also now*. And this *now* will last to the end of the world. Always in this world, the flesh and the spirit will be opposed, and the children of the flesh, who live for earthly aims and objects, will annoy and persecute the children of freedom, whose hope and inheritance is in

eternity. *All who will live piously in Christ will suffer persecution, 2 Tim. iii. 12.* Every believer in Christ, who is honest and fears God, must make up his mind to this. This life is no place of peace and rest ; yet it is to peace and rest that temporal persecution leads, and of peace and rest that temporal persecution is a pledge. *Blessed who endure persecution ; for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.* The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, which shall be revealed in us, at the final emancipation and freedom of the glory of the sons of God. That is our inheritance and destiny, for the Holy Catholic Church, the Jerusalem, which is from above, is free, who is the mother of us all.

CHAPTER V.

1. STAND, and do not again become bound under a yoke of bondage.

2. Behold, I Paul say to you, that if you are circumcised, Christ will in nothing profit you.

3. And I testify again to every man who circumcises himself that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4. You are emptied from Christ, who are being justified in the law : you have fallen away from grace.

CHAPTER V. In this chapter the Apostle, while urging the Galatian Christians to the preservation of their Christian freedom, explains that this freedom does not consist in carnal license.

1. *Stand.* The Greek text, as also the Syriac version, join to this verb the concluding words of the last chapter. We are children, not of the slave, but of the free. Stand, therefore, in the liberty in which Christ has made you free. The different arrangement of the words does not, however, materially affect the sense. The liberty with which Christ had made them free, was emancipation from the obligations of the Hebrew law, as appears from the last words of ch. iv. But the paganism from which the Galatians had escaped was also a state of bondage and slavery, for he adds, having escaped one yoke of servitude, be not caught, made captive, entangled in another. *Do not again become bound.*

Between judaism and paganism there was not much to choose.

2. *Behold, I Paul say to you.* The judaizing teachers had appealed to Moses. *Unless you are circumcised as Moses prescribed, you cannot be saved*, Act. xvi. Saint Paul names himself, as an authority equal to Moses, and teaching, not only the negative of this proposition, but the direct contrary. You cannot be saved if you are circumcised. For you cannot be saved without Christ, and in that case Christ will not profit you. It is important to observe that this is not said to Jewish converts, but only to Gentiles. While circumcision was not necessary to salvation either to Jews or Gentiles, it was not as yet *deadly* or mortal for persons born of Jewish parents, and such often accepted it as a matter of custom, as in the case of St. Timothy, Act. xvi. 3. But for Gentile converts to receive it after baptism, was fatal, for such a proceeding implied that they relied upon circumcision and the Mosaic law for salvation, and had no confidence in the faith of Christ and the sacraments of the Church. It was an act of apostasy from Christ, and his incarnation, passion, and death, will not profit those who thus openly protest that his faith is not sufficient for salvation.

3. The heretical teachers did not observe a great part of the law of Moses, or profess to do so. They told the Galatians that if they received circumcision and practised some few of the more prominent and characteristic of the Hebrew customs, such as were open to public observation, such as the solemnization of sabbaths and new moons, &c. referred to in ch. iv. 10, this was all that was required. The object evidently was first, to bring them within the terms of the edicts and enactments of the Roman government, which at that time protected the Jews, so that they might avoid persecution; and next, to withdraw them from communion with the Apostles. St. Paul here

insists that any man who received circumcision was bound to the fulfilment of every detail of the Mosaic law, of which it was a public profession, as baptism was a public profession of the Christian faith. This consideration was calculated to make them pause before taking such a step. It was an acceptance of a new religion, and abandonment of that which he had taught them. *You are emptied*, annihilated, abolished from Christ, have lost your hope in him, are no longer branches of the true vine, or capable of receiving his grace, inasmuch as you are seeking salvation by another law. This is further explained in the next verse.

5. For we by the spirit from faith expect the hope of justice.

6. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is of any value, nor uncircumcision, but faith which operates through charity.

5. We who are Christians seek for justification by faith, and by the action of the spiritual faculties of our nature, not in ceremonies and observances purely material and external. The *hope of justice* is a hebraism, implying the justice hoped for: the remission of sins and grace of God promised to believers in Christ, and that eternal life which is the reward of justice hereafter.

6. For in the religion of Jesus Christ it is unimportant whether the believer is circumcised or uncircumcised. Faith has removed and obliterated all such external distinctions. God does not regard what belongs only to the body, but the condition of the heart. As the leaders of an army require in their soldiers not to be fair or dark, but courage and skill in their duties, says St. Chrysostom, so God considers in his soldiers not outward circum-

stances, but a mind and disposition animated and directed by faith, as its principle of life. *Faith which operates through charity.* The Greek, *effectual through charity.* The Syriac has: faith which is made perfect by charity. Shown to be always living, active, and effectual by the love of Jesus Christ. The only faith which is of value in Christ Jesus is that which burns with charity, and toils unwearied in good works, says St. Anselm. This is the Christian's faith. The faith that does nothing, and is destitute of charity, is the devils' faith.

7. You ran well: who hindered you, not to obey the truth?

8. This persuasion is not of him who called you.

9. A little leaven corrupts the whole mass.

10. I trust in you, in the Lord, that you will think no otherwise: but he who troubles you, shall bear the judgment, whoever he is.

11. And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution; therefore the scandal of the cross is gone.

12. I wish they may be even cut off who trouble you.

7. *You ran well.* A high commendation, following on what the Apostle has just said of the faith which operates through charity. In this course you were once actively engaged. Who is it who has suddenly stopped you in your course and thrown you back? This question, St. Chrysostom observes, is not for information, but an expression of sorrow and anxiety, like the *who fascinated* you in iii. 1. The object in view can have been only to hinder your *obeying the truth.*

8. God is never contrary to himself, and he who called you to the faith of his Son, has certainly not now per-

suaded you to reject that faith by receiving circumcision. This persuasion, whoever is the author of it, is not *of him who called you*.

9. *A little leaven* spreads its effect through the whole mass of dough. A single error, though it may originate with only one or two individuals, will infect the whole community. The same words occur in 1. Cor. v. 6, with reference to error of another kind, but the principle is applicable equally to every description of evil introduced by the malice of the devil or of evil men. St. Paul's words indicate that the sinister influence he refers to among the Galatian Christians sprang from a very small number of persons, perhaps only one in the first instance, only one being referred to in verse 10. It is impossible to overrate the mischief that may be done by one evil example, one word of scandal. One wicked man can poison a whole city with the infection of his example, one heretic lead astray a whole church or nation. Calvin, Luther, and other heretical teachers were a *little leaven*, but they led away whole nations from the faith of Christ.

10. I trust and confide in you, that when you have fully considered the question, in the light in which I have laid it before you in this Epistle, you will adopt or retain no opinion or conviction which is not part of, or consistent with, the doctrine I taught you. The author of all this confusion, whoever he may be—he was probably a person of local authority and influence, and most likely a Jew—will pay the penalty of his guilt, by the justice of God, who is the avenger of all heresy. *Woe to him by whom offence cometh*.

11. *If I still preach circumcision*. This falsehood must have been circulated, with others, regarding the doctrine and practice of Saint Paul, grounded probably on his having induced Timothy to receive circumcision, for special

reasons, which were wholly inapplicable to the case of Gentile converts. As he observes, the persecution he suffered at the hands of the Jews was a sufficient proof that the doctrine he taught on this point was not such as suited their views. *The scandal of the cross has ceased.* They would have been offended in much less degree by the simple preaching of Christ crucified, than by the announcement that Christ had abolished the observances of the Jewish law. The removal of the greater stumbling-stone would in effect have removed also the lesser.

12. *I wish they may even be cut off.* St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, St. Jerome, Cajetan, and other writers, give a literal interpretation to this wish expressed by St. Paul. I wish these apostles of circumcision may be themselves not circumcised, for that they are, but cut off altogether. Erasmus and other modern writers appear to think this imprecation hardly consistent with Apostolic gravity: and understand the wish to mean, that they may be cut off from God's mercy and the hope of salvation in Christ. Ambrose considers both meanings included. He curses them spiritually, and corporally as well, to multiply their pain. It is possible the Apostle refers to ecclesiastical censure, but in the bitterness of his heart, and resentment and indignation against these troublers of the peace of the Church, uses this equivocal and pointed term.

13. For you have been called into freedom, brethren; only give not freedom for an occasion of the flesh, but through charity of spirit serve one another.

14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

15. But if you bite and eat up one another, see that you are not consumed by one another.

13. I would they were cut off who trouble you, because

God has called you to freedom, and that freedom they would take away. In what does this freedom consist? The answer to this question occupies the remainder of this Epistle, as far as the concluding words, from ch. vi. 11, which the Apostle adds with his own hand. Christian freedom consists 1. in freedom from the burdensome obligation of the ceremonies of the law, which in the first verse of this chapter he calls *a yoke of servitude*. 2. In freedom from servile fear, which he describes as the effect produced by the law, at the beginning of the fourth chapter. 3. Especially and above all, freedom from the service of sin, from which Christ died to redeem us, Rom. vi. 18. *Only give not freedom for an occasion to the flesh*. There is no verb in this sentence in the Greek text. The Vulgate supplies *detis*; the Syriac, let not your liberty *be* an occasion, &c. The Apostle first indicates the misuse of this freedom, that they may avoid it; then its end and object, which is charity, that they may pursue it; then, in verse 16, the means of attaining it. *Walk in the Spirit*.

Freedom from the yoke of the law and the fear of its penalties is not given you that you may fulfil the desires of the flesh, neither are you set free for this purpose. Such a statement would hardly be required in these days, but in the time of St. Paul so many erroneous doctrines and systems of philosophy were current in the world, that the caution was not unnecessary.

By charity of spirit serve one another. The more complete your emancipation, by means of your Christian calling, from a series of troublesome and unprofitable restrictions and ceremonies, the more diligently endeavour to *serve one another*, by a voluntary interchange of good offices, in a spirit of charity. Charity, the spirit of love, is that which should animate Christians; make use of your freedom, therefore, for the cultivation of it. Not only refrain

from injuring another, but by love serve one another. Christ has changed the heavy and insupportable yoke of the law into the gentle, happy, and voluntary yoke of kindness. Happy, who bears this yoke, for he serves God, the source of all good ; for *God is charity*.

14. *All the law*, so far as it regards our relation to others, *is fulfilled in one word*. Lev. xix. 18. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour* spiritually, for God's sake, and in order to eternal life. There are two precepts of charity, according to the material distinction of the object, the love of God and of our neighbour ; but there is only one *charity*, that by which God is loved, and our neighbour for God's sake. The one command is therefore often included in the other. *One word*, but including all the business of all our lives. Love, and do what you will.

15. *But if you bite and eat up one another*, by mutual animosities, slander, and detraction. The introduction of the new doctrine had, no doubt, introduced much of this strife among the Galatians, and the Apostle counsels first charity for the extinction of these angry feelings. Then he seeks to deter the Galatians from quarrels and dissensions by pointing to the evil end to which they so often lead, comparing the combatants to fighting dogs, who will bite and tear one another, sometimes to death. Contention brings corruption and death, not only upon the victims of it, but upon its authors and originators as well, says Saint Chrysostom. The fruit of strife is waste of life, says Ambrose. And St. Augustine says that human society, divided into two parties, is already in process of dissolution.

16. And I say : walk by the Spirit ; and the desires of the flesh you shall not fulfil.

17. For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are antagonistic to one another, so that you do not everything you wish.

18. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

16. *And I say*, to emphasize what follows. As he has just reduced all the precepts of the law to the one precept of charity, so now he brings all the means of making charity perfect under one rule. *Walk by the Spirit*. Live according to the dictate of the Holy Spirit, and you will not fulfil the desires of the flesh. By *the flesh*, in this passage, is signified desire, either that of the physical appetites, as gluttony or luxury: or of irascible feeling, as envy, malice, or resentment: or of the rational appetite, as the desire of fame or distinction. Although these desires all influence the soul, they are called collectively *the flesh*, because for the most part it is from the animal nature that they arise. But the Apostle does not say, the desires of the flesh you shall not feel, or be sensible of, because this is in this life inevitable, but you shall not fulfil them, either by internal consent or outward act, for this you will easily avoid, by living according to the impulse of the Spirit of God.

17. The Syriac version reads this verse: Inasmuch as the flesh desires that which injures the spirit, and the spirit that which injures the flesh; and these two are contrary to one another, so that you do not what you would. The flesh desires what is pleasant and agreeable, the spirit what is holy; the flesh desires what is carnal, earthly, and temporal, the spirit what is spiritual, celestial, and eternal. And these are so opposed that frequently we cannot do all we would. We would not desire, yet in spite of ourselves we do desire. We would do good with fervour and alacrity, but the flesh resists the

impulse of the will, and weighs down the soul, and makes us tepid and inactive.

These opposite movements of nature and of grace are described, with great simplicity of language, but with great force and truth, in the third book of the Imitation of Christ, cap. 54. Saint Augustine vividly describes the same conflict as carried on within himself, in the eighth book of the Confessions; and the final victory of the spirit, and overthrow of rebellion against its authority, in his commentary on Psalm lxxv.

It must be observed that in this passage, as elsewhere in the writings of St. Paul, the *spirit* does not signify the intellectual faculties of human nature as distinguished from the animal faculties; a sense in which the term is sometimes used in modern philosophy; for the mind and body are so mysteriously allied and related that the same or similar impulses and motives govern both. The spirit means the supernatural power of the Spirit of God upon the human heart, the reality of which is proved by its results, though the mode of its action cannot ordinarily be traced.

18. *If you are led by the Spirit you are not under law.* A parenthetical statement, importing that we have here the real solution of the controversy about the law. Led by the Spirit, you do of your own accord, and from the motive of affection, that which the law prescribes, and exacts by menace of penalty to be incurred by transgression. You are above the law, and beyond it, and there is no law opposed to you. If all Christians walked by the Spirit, and all mankind were Christians, no *laws* would be required. You have in that case, what the law cannot impart, the spirit of sons, not servants. We shall find this statement repeated in verse 23.

19. And the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury,

20. Service of idols, magic, enmities, contentions, emulations, anger, quarrels, dissensions, sects,

21. Jealousies, homicides, drunkenness, revelling, and things like these : which I declare to you, as I have already declared, that they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God.

22. And the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering.

23. Gentleness, fidelity, modesty, continence, chastity ; against such there is no law.

19. Lest there should be any doubt, amid the general corruption of pagan society then prevailing, as to what is meant by the *flesh* and the spirit, or any should pretend to doubt, the Apostle proceeds to enumerate the effects of each ; observing that *the works of the flesh* are plainly manifest to all who have eyes to see. The four named in verse 19 do not exactly correspond with the Greek, which has, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, luxury ; this last term the Vulgate appears to divide into two. *Idolatry* and *magic* were temptations of powerful influence in ancient times, though now in some degree out of date. Magic charms were supposed to control persons at a distance, or secure affection, or do injury to persons or property, and the pretenders to such powers as these made a profitable trade out of the wickedness and credulity of those who trusted to them. The Greek word for *sects* is *heresies*. It is interesting to observe that the Apostle considers that the motives which prompt men to cavil at the faith, and set up parties in opposition to the Church of God, have their origin in this world, and in man's fallen nature, so that he classes these among the works of the flesh. Those who do these things, or things like them, shall not attain, in the Greek *inherit*, the kingdom of God, or a kingdom of

God. This is a statement which Christians not unfrequently lose sight of. Of the seven mortal sins, or classes of mortal sin, two only, luxury and gluttony, have directly reference to the body. The others are spiritual. Yet most people, as is evident by their confessions, do penance only for sins of the body, and pass over all the others as immaterial. And yet it is of all alike that the Apostle says, that they who do such things shall not inherit God's kingdom.

22. Saint Paul speaks of *the works of the flesh*, and the *fruits of the Spirit*. Carnal and worldly passions move and *work* tumultuously in the soul, and produce crime, death, and ruin. But the Holy Spirit acts powerfully, yet insensibly, and is seen only in his effects, as the influence of the sunshine is seen in the harvest and the vintage. The *fruits* of his presence are charity, joy, peace, and the others. *Patience*, *modesty*, and *chastity*, given in the list in the Vulgate, are wanting in the Greek, and in the same list as given both by Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine. The Greek text gives, therefore, nine fruits of the Spirit, the Vulgate, twelve. The Syriac version also gives only nine; Ambrose includes ten. The Greek list is: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, fidelity, meekness, continence. It would seem, and is observed by Estius, that the Greek word *μακροθυμία* is translated in the Vulgate by the two words *patience* and *long-suffering*, *πραότης* by *gentleness* and *modesty*, and *ἐγκράτεια* by *continence* and *chastity*; thus increasing the list as given in the Greek by three. Charity is the principal fruit of the Spirit; and charity does no ill. The fruits of the Spirit are opposed in general and in detail to the works of the flesh. Joy is opposed to *envy*, which is pain at another's happiness; *peace* to *enmity*; *patience* to *strife* and *quarrelling*; goodness to magic and homicide; continence to luxury and gluttony.

Against such there is no law. Laws are not enacted for the just. The law is given for those who err, says Ambrose. If all men were such as the Apostle here describes, penal legislation would be altogether unnecessary.

It is to be observed that while the works of the flesh enumerated by the Apostle, are the ordinary and natural result of the passions and desires of human nature, directed to objects belonging to this mortal life, and not controlled by grace, the fruits of Spirit are all supernatural and the effect of the grace of the Holy Spirit acting on the powers and faculties of human nature.

24. And they who are of Christ crucified the flesh with the vices and concupiscences.

25. If we live by spirit, by spirit also let us walk.

26. Let us not become desirous of empty glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

This enumeration of the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit now enables the Apostle to place the combatants in array, distinguishing the soldiers of Christ from those who are devoted to the interests of this world. Those who belong to Christ crucify the aims, ambitions, and desires that belong to this mortal life, or contribute to the satisfaction of our animal nature. The verb is used by the Apostle in the Greek text, in the aorist, and may possibly have a general sense as regards time present, past, or future. The Vulgate reads *crucifixerunt*. A man crucified is bound to the cross, his body torn and dislocated, his life blood drained, life itself by slow degrees extinguished. So the Christian crucifies concupiscence, binds, crushes, enfeebles it to death. The flesh of Christ on the cross is the exemplar of Christian mortification. The Apostle does not say that the Christian crucifies the body, for the body is often thereby

rendered stronger and more effective for the service of God ; and the body will be raised one day from the grave to eternal strength and immortality. What is crucified, or mortified, is *the flesh* in a figurative sense, all desires, affections, and inclinations which find their satisfaction in anything that is limited and measured by this mortal life. And as Christ died for our sins in pain and suffering, so not without pain and suffering can sin be crucified in us.

25. St. Paul repeats in this verse what he said in verse 16. *Walk by the Spirit*, and you will not fulfil the desires of the flesh. To crucify the flesh, walk by the guidance of God's Spirit, whose presence is the life of the soul. The Syriac reads : Let us live by spirit, and follow spirit.

26. *Let us not become desirous of empty glory*. In this verse the Apostle reproves three spiritual faults, which are closely connected together ; into which those are liable to fall who do not fall into sins of the flesh ; and which were doubtless frequent among the persons to whom he is writing. First, *empty glory*, that is the pursuit of honour where true honour is not to be found, as in science, eloquence, or riches, or delight in the distinction and respect which the possession of such things generally carries with it, in the false estimate which the world so often forms. The contempt of others who do not possess these things, with an inclination to expose their shortcomings. Lastly, envy of such as possess them in a greater degree than ourselves. For these also are included in *the works of the flesh*, which he that belongs to Christ, and walks under the guidance of the Spirit, will learn to crucify.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The unspeakable dignity conferred by regeneration in Christ consists in this, that we are made thereby sons of God, instead of sons of man. For we have put on Christ ; and we have the Spirit of Christ in our hearts. But being the sons of God, we no longer serve God as slaves, nor as children under age ; we are sons of full age, grown up, free, placed already in part in possession of our Father's inheritance, of which the Holy Spirit has given us a pledge. For what purpose are we thus made sons of God ; and for what purpose has the Spirit of God been infused into our hearts ?

We have been made sons of God in order that we may love God, our most loving Father, with all our hearts, and serve him, not from fear of punishment, but from filial affection, fulfilling his commandments for charity, as his own dear sons. And as God is Charity, so the Christian, who is God's son, as a partaker of the charity of God, should live in charity and by charity should act.

And the Spirit of God has been infused into our hearts, that we may walk by the Spirit, and mortify the deeds of the flesh. For as long as we are in this mortal state, there are two natures within us, the spirit and the flesh, struggling in antagonism to one another, and drawing us in opposite directions. In presence of this interior conflict, what course is the Christian to adopt ? The Apostle answers this question. Take firmly and decidedly the side of the Spirit. Walk by the dictates of the Spirit, and fulfil not the desires of the flesh. Then will the flesh be crucified and perish at last, and the Spirit will triumph.

There are, therefore, three things which the Christian is to keep continually in view. 1. The end he aims at.

2. That which he is carefully to avoid. 3. The means of attaining the one and escaping the other.

1. Charity is the end he aims at, and the object and intention of all the Christian religion, and of that freedom of sonship which we enjoy in Christ. We are to love God as sons, not servants. We are freed from the yoke of the law that we may for charity serve one another. The exercise and increase of charity is the end of our adoption and the ground and motive of our freedom.

2. What we have to guard against is the danger of making a wrong use of our Christian freedom, by following the desires of the flesh. Make not your freedom an occasion to the flesh. It is not the will of God that we should misuse our Christian freedom and so perish in sin.

3. The means of accomplishing both these objects is to walk by the Spirit, and *crucify* the flesh. That is, mortify, by the refusal of gratification, all desires which are sinful in themselves, or purely worldly, having no object in view beyond what belongs to this miserable and transitory life of mortality. As Christ died on the cross, so are we to crucify sin.

God has been generous to us, and has given us freedom and adoption. Of this freedom and adoption we shall in return make a generous use, and the only use which is not base, treacherous, and ungrateful, if we make it the object of our lives to become worthy of our Heavenly Father's affection, and struggle against and overthrow his enemies and ours.

CHAPTER VI.

1. BRETHREN, even if a man shall have been taken in any fault ; you who are spiritual, instruct such one in a spirit of gentleness ; considering thyself, lest thou be also tempted.

2. Bear the burdens of one another, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ.

3. For if any one thinks himself to be anything when he is nothing, he is his own deceiver.

4. And let each prove his own work ; and then in himself only he shall have glory, and not in the other.

5. For each shall bear his own burden.

CHAPTER VI. In this chapter, the Apostle exhorts the Christians of Galatia to active charity ; and concludes the Epistle with a solemn and formal condemnation, written with his own hand, of the judaizing errors with which they were threatened.

1. Saint Paul has pronounced the error of doctrine into which heretical teachers were endeavouring to draw the Christians of Galatia, as nothing less than apostasy from Christ, and involving the loss of their eternal inheritance. But he acts himself, and requires them to act, with the greatest gentleness and forbearance towards individuals who may, by ignorance or carelessness, have been led astray into these errors. The expression if *a man*, *homo*, shall have fallen into a fault, is a Hebrew

idiom, in Greek and Latin this substantive being rarely used where it is to be understood. If any among you shall have already fallen into these errors I have described, or any of them, and especially heresy, you who retain your faith and are led by the Spirit of God, instruct, or restore him; not condemn or punish him, but correct him in a spirit of gentleness. Not gently, only, but in genuine and interior spirit of charity, kindness, and desire for his salvation, an affection which comes from the Spirit of God, who inspires his own gentleness into your hearts. *I am meek and humble of heart*, not in words or appearance only, but in spirit and disposition.

Considering thyself, he adopts the singular number, as if to make his warning more personal, pointed, and direct. *Lest thou also be tempted*. The Syriac has: and beware lest ye also be tempted. Lest haply you yield to the same or a similar temptation.

2. *Bear one another's burdens*. Treat the fallen with compassion, and correct them with gentleness, as if their errors were your own, and you bore the burden of them. By *burden* the Apostle denotes any kind of sin, and more particularly that of apostasy, to which this passage refers, and we bear the burdens of our neighbours when we strive to correct them with sympathy, mildness, and compassion. *Thus you will fulfil the law of Christ*, which is the law of charity. The Greek has the imperative mood, *and thus fulfil*. St. Chrysostom observes that the Apostle does not say simply *fill*, but *fulfil*, absolutely and completely, as if every other duty of charity had been discharged, and this alone remained to make the observance of the law complete.

3. Every one who thinks himself *anything*, is guilty of self-deception, because in the presence of God we are all *nothing*.

4. *Let each prove his own work*, that is, let each one ex-

amine and judge of his own works, not by comparison with others, like the Pharisee who thanked God he was not as other men, but by comparison with the rule of life, by which we shall be judged at the judgment of God. Every other standard but this is deceptive and fallacious. And so far as, judged by this standard, he finds his work to be just, right, and good, he will have the approval of his conscience, and will *glory* in God. This does not imply that he is to glory in himself. This the fear of the divine judgment forbids. For who is just before God ? and who, before the Saint of saints, will dare to boast of sanctity ? But when the Apostle says that the Christian will have glory in himself alone, and not another, he means that his merit will be assigned according to what he has done, and not in comparison with any other. The Christian, therefore, is not to boast at the expense of another, and he who refrains from doing this, with due consideration of the reason, will not glory in himself, for he will recal his own sins, bearing the burden of which he must himself appear before God. For in the great judgment of God each one must *bear his own burden*, answer for his own sins, and receive God's sentence, which will pass on the true merits of the case, without any alleviation or excuse on the ground that others are worse.

Although the injunctions conveyed in these verses have direct and immediate reference to the case of the Galatians, and the danger of apostasy which threatened them, they include the principle on which Christian charity will deal with sinners in all cases. First every excuse should be made for the guilty. They may have been *taken* or overtaken, against their deliberate intention and will. Secondly they should be dealt with gently, leniently, and compassionately, not in words and appearance only, but in true charity of spirit. Thirdly those who correct others, aware of their own fragility, should fear for themselves.

He to-day, I to-morrow, says an ancient Father. God not unfrequently punishes the hard and unmerciful by allowing them to be involved in temptations similar to the sins they have rebuked in others. Fourthly, we should bear the infirmities of others, as Christ bore ours. He bore our sins, by expiating and taking them away. So should we bear the burden of others, and do what is in our power to take them away, by compassion, by instruction, by prayer, and by doing penance for them. And this is imitation of Christ, who for us prayed, did penance, suffered and died. If a mule falls under its burden, the driver must remove the burden and take it in his arms, before he can raise the fallen animal. Thus must the burden of the sinner be removed, for his improvement and correction. And lastly, to beware, lest, like the Pharisee, we take pride in the evil deeds of others, than which nothing can be less consistent with Christian charity, or give greater offence to God. For as is observed by Optatus Milevitanus, quoted by Cornelius à Lapide, on Luc. xviii. 14, it is better to sin with humility than to be innocent with pride.

6. And let him who is catechized in the word communicate to him who catechizes him, in all good things.

7. Do not err, God is not mocked.

6. He who is taught the Gospel of Christ, should freely contribute from his temporal goods to the support of his teacher. Having instructed *those who are spiritual* in the duty of charity and forbearance towards the weak, St. Paul now urges upon the laity the duty of supporting their pastors and teachers. The Greek verb ἡχεῖν signifies to sound with the voice. Hence the word *echo*. Κατηχεῖν is to instruct vocally, and from this we obtain catechist, an instructor in the Christian mysteries; catechumen,

the person instructed ; and catechism, the form of doctrine taught. The Apostles were *catechists*, and the later Fathers followed them, and the office, therefore, is of Apostolic origin.

Saint Chrysostom observes that God, who fed the ungrateful Israelites with manna, permitted the Apostles to live in poverty. This was for the attainment of two great objects, moderation and charity. Moderation in the teachers, who depend upon their disciples, charity in the disciples, in supplying the wants of the teachers. In the same spirit our father Francis, truly Apostolic and seraphic, would have us poor, that we may be the more humble and of greater service to our neighbours, even from absolute necessity. St. Chrysostom further says that a teacher who asks and receives only what is requisite for subsistence, loses no dignity thereby ; for a teacher so assiduous in the ministry of the word as to pay no regard to the supply of his own wants, and willing to labour in poverty, is worthy of all praise. Evangelical poverty which despises earthly things to obtain, and communicate to others, the things of heaven, is laudable in the highest degree, and gives what is of much greater value than anything it can possibly receive. *If we have sown to you what is spiritual, is it much if we reap from you what is carnal ?* 1. Cor. ix., 11.

7. *Do not mistake. God is not mocked*, by false excuses you may offer for the neglect of this duty. He sees and knows all, and judges rightly, and your own conscience can also judge.

8. For what a man has sown, this he shall also reap : because he who sows in his flesh, from the flesh shall also reap corruption : and he who sows in the spirit, shall in the spirit reap life eternal.

9. And doing good, let us not fail : for in its own time we shall reap, not failing.

10. Therefore, while we have time, let us work good to all, and especially to those who are of the family of faith.

8. The injunction just given, with regard to the duty of supplying the teachers of the Gospel with the necessities of life, is in these verses more generally extended, so as to apply to the use made of time, money, faculties of the mind, and other gifts of God, especially with reference to the obligation of employing these for the benefit of our neighbours. *What a man soweth, he shall reap.* This life is the sowing time, the life of eternity the time of reaping. He who lives for this world, its pleasures or its ambitions, *soweth to his flesh* ; that is, the flesh, the mortal nature and the mortal life, is the field in which he sows. We have already seen what are *the works of the flesh*. *The flesh* is but corruption, and corruption he will reap ; disgrace, punishment, eternal death. He who lives for charity and good works, throws the seed into the bosom of God, the field of the Holy Spirit ; whence he shall reap eternal beatitude of soul and body, through the power of the Spirit. *The fruits of the Spirit* have been already enumerated ; the perfection of them will constitute *life eternal*. St. Paul says, *sows in his own flesh*, because the flesh is the fallen nature of man, but he does not say *his own spirit*, but *in the Spirit*, because the Holy Spirit is the fountain of grace and charity.

9. The Greek has : Let us not weary in doing what is generous and good, for in due time we shall reap, and not be weary. The Syriac : Let us do good, and not be weary ; for one day we shall reap, and not be weary. For as St. Chrysostom observes, in this life sowing and reaping are both wearisome. The reaper faints in the summer

heat, and his toil is never heavier. But in *that* harvest there shall be neither toil nor labour, but only rest and joy.

10. *While we have time.* It is not sowing time all the year round ; neither does the time of well-doing last for ever. The night cometh, when none can work. The foolish virgins went to purchase oil, but too late, and were excluded from the wedding feast, Matt. xxv. The rich man feasted every day, until he died, and in hell he opened his eyes in torment, Luc. xvi., 23. While we have time, let us do good, so far as is in our power, to all men, for all are our neighbours. Even the stranger, of a different faith, was *neighbour* to him who fell among thieves, Luc. x. 36. But especially to the faithful in Christ, who by faith belong to his family or household. Literally, *the domestics of the faith, domesticos fidei*, for these have the first claim upon us. The Church is God's house, and Christian people are inmates of that house, and members of God's family. The Christian, therefore, has the first claim upon his brethren, as the servant and child of God, and among the faithful, those especially who have given up all means and opportunities of worldly gain to devote themselves to teaching the Gospel of Christ.

11. See with what letters I have written to you with my hand.

12. For whoever aim at pleasing in the flesh, these desire you to be circumcised ; only that they may not suffer the persecution of the cross of Christ.

13. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law ; but wish you to be circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14. But for me, God forbid I should glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom to me the world is crucified, and I to the world.

15. For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any value, nor uncircumcision, but new creation.

16. And whoever shall have followed this rule ; peace on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17. For the rest let no one give me trouble ; for I bear in my body the stigmata of the Lord Jesus.

18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

II. See how long a letter I have written to you, not as usual, by the hand of another, but throughout with my own hand. For though this Epistle is not so long as several others of St. Paul, the longer ones were written by an amanuensis at his dictation. There is, however, much difference of opinion as to the meaning of these words. Saint Jerome thinks that up to this point the letter was dictated to a writer, and that Saint Paul only added the concluding verses, from this point to the end, with his own hand. The Greek words *πηλίκους γράμμασιν* signify *with letters of how large a size*, as if the Apostle had some affection of the eyes which injured his sight, and compelled him, whenever he wrote, to write very large. The words of the Vulgate, *qualibus literis*, seem to imply that the Latin translator took this view, as also did St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact, except that these three writers differ from St. Jerome in thinking that the Epistle was written throughout by the Apostle with his own hand. St. Chrysostom says it refers to the unskilful manner in which the letters were formed, as if the writer had said, I have written all this with my own hand, though I do not write well, and do not form the Greek characters correctly ; and that he calls attention to the circumstance to prove that the document was really his own, and not a forgery passed off by another person in his name. Saint Anselm, on the other hand, has the

singular idea that Saint Paul is directing their attention to the beauty of the letters he forms, as if he would have said, see how well I write Greek. Yet the word *πηλικοίς* is an adjective of quantity, and cannot refer to anything but the *size* of the letters. However this may be, it is certain that the Apostle's writing with his own hand was a mark of regard and affection for the Galatian Christians; and that he certainly wrote with his own hand the remainder of the Epistle from this point to the end.

12. St. Paul states at once, without apology or circumlocution, the real motive of those who were endeavouring to lead the Christians of Galatia astray. They wished not to offend the Jews, who were at that time influential and powerful, so that they might avoid the annoyance and persecution which commonly overtook the preachers of the Gospel of Christ. The Jews cared very little whether Christ was preached or not, so long as circumcision and the law of Moses were not abolished: because these were national customs, on the maintenance of which their influence and organization depended. These heretical teachers therefore preached Christ for gain, and circumcision and the law at the same time, to please the Jews. Not that they cared to observe the law; but they would have *you* circumcised that they may boast of you to the chiefs of the Jewish party as converts to Judaism.

14. *God forbid that I should glory.* The Apostle puts his own motives, principles, and conduct in contrast with those of the men whom he has been describing. God forbid I should do anything, change anything in the doctrine of the religion of Christ, to avoid persecution, or obtain the goodwill and the praise of men. For all my glory, and all my rejoicing, is *in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, believing it, preaching it, in my measure sharing it. This is all my joy and all my glory. For the love of

Christ our Lord all the universe is no more to me than the dead body of one who has been crucified, worthless and good for nothing, an object even of detestation and abhorrence, so far as there is any danger of its drawing away to itself, for one moment, or in the smallest degree, any part of the allegiance and adoration of my heart and soul, which is consecrated to him. And for his sake I am not only willing, but proud and joyful, and make it my highest boast and glorying, to be myself regarded by the world, as on his account I am regarded, and by all who love this world, as an outcast, beneath notice, utterly unworthy of consideration and regard, an object of scorn, detestation, and abhorrence, like the body of one who has been crucified. In anything but this, God forbid that I should glory. The world is crucified to me, and I to the world.

15. This verse contains in a few words what is in effect an epitome of the whole Epistle. *In Christ Jesus*, in the Christian religion, and before the presence of God, circumcision has no value, nor uncircumcision, nor will either condition affect salvation; which depends upon the renewal of the soul by grace. The word *creatura*, like the Greek word to which it corresponds, may be rendered either in the abstract or the concrete: the act of creation, or the thing created. The *new creature* is the soul exteriorly regenerated by baptism, interiorly renewed by grace, walking in newness of life, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and for charity observing his commands.

16. Those who observe this rule of life, the Syriac, those who walk along this path, just described, and further explained in the teaching of this Epistle, peace and mercy be upon them, whether they have been Jews or Gentiles before their conversion to Christ. For the true Israel of God are those who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of

God, and the son promised to Abraham, and in him look for justification and salvation.

17. Henceforward let no one, whether a Judaizer or any other, give me further trouble, the Syriac, impose further toil or labour upon me, with regard to this question of circumcision, or Hebrew rites and ceremonies; for I have fully stated the mind and teaching of Jesus Christ on this subject. If they are circumcised, so am I; but what is far greater, and an infinitely higher privilege, I bear in my body the marks which prove that I have been partaker of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, who was in a sense circumcised in his whole body. From the sole of his foot to the head there was no soundness, by the thorns that tore his head, the nails that pierced his hands and feet, the gashes of the scourge, the thrust of the lance. Marks, more or less, like these I also bear in my body, and if they glory in their circumcision, I will glory in sharing Christ's sufferings. They can show nothing of this sort. The very purpose for which they preach circumcision is that they may escape all risk of ever doing so. Saint Paul had been *thrice beaten with rods*, to which perhaps he here particularly refers. At the very time he wrote these words he was living under arrest, in the city of Rome, and very probably fastened by a chain and handcuff to the soldier who guarded him.

18. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.* In all the other Epistles, except the second to Timothy and that to Philemon, Saint Paul says, *be with you*. Saint Chrysostom thinks he here writes expressly *with your spirit*, in order to remind the Galatians that it is by faith, which is a spiritual act, not by any exterior ceremonies of the Hebrew law, that they were to look for salvation in Jesus Christ; and that they had received the Holy Spirit of God by faith, not by the law.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. There is no occasion to enter into metaphysical distinctions as to any difference there may be, or not be, between the *spirit* and *soul*, in man. Some have attempted to distinguish between them. It is enough to know that into the material frame, formed of the dust of the earth, by the hands of omnipotence, God breathed the breath of life, and man became a living soul, and an immortal spirit. Man is one, body, soul, and spirit. The *Dominus vobiscum*, and *cum spiritu tuo*, are not different prayers, but the same in a different phrase, and if the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit of man, the spirit of man is strengthened and vivified by that grace, and enabled to hold its proper place as sovereign over all faculties and functions of soul and body, over the will, the exercise of the intellectual powers, the affections, and the movements of physical action and life. When the powers of the mind, and the purpose of the will, are applied to what tends only to the preservation, the enlargement, or the enjoyment of this mortal state and what belongs to it, and is bounded by it, this is said to be (in philosophical language, not in poetry) the action of the *soul*. When they rise above this world, expand in faith, and strive after perfection and happiness in eternity, this is the life of the spirit. The higher faculties of man's nature are formed by our Creator to answer to and receive the impress and impulse of that which is to raise them to glory, and give them wings to soar to heaven. This is *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who is our Creator, and who, in forming our nature, looked forward to investing himself with it, and, therefore, made the human nature capable of becoming the vehicle of the

Divine. Without the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, man's spirit, however wonderfully formed, is useless and imperfect, and cannot attain the end for which it was created. It is the almond tree that never blossoms, the vine that yields wild grapes, the chrysalis that dies in the earth, and never expands to the sun the wings folded within it. With the aid of that grace, there is no height of glory to which it may not rise. For Christ has enthroned the nature of man, spirit, soul, and body, at the right hand of the Majesty that is in the heavens, for the admiration of the universe and the adoration of the Angels. And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will not fail to accompany, animate, transform, guide through the perils and perplexities of life, and bring to the consummation of perfection and complete beatitude of soul and body in the life to come, all those who persevere till death in the faith of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Catholic Church. This is, in brief and in sum, the truth which Saint Paul enforces in the Epistle he concludes with these words, and which he so earnestly implores the Galatian Christians to accept and adhere to. Such are the true sons of God, the true heirs of the promises made to Saints of old, the true citizens of that Jerusalem which is from above, who is the mother of us all. The grace of Christ is that which alone can deliver human nature from corruption, can alone raise it to the life for which it was created, which is life eternal. And that grace all who believe in Christ have received and may retain, until the life of grace and hope is absorbed in the life of security and glory.

THE EPISTLE OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

PREFACE.

THIS Epistle, written while St. Paul was a prisoner at Rome, is entitled as addressed to the Christians of Ephesus, the famous capital city of the Roman province of Asia. Ancient writers have sometimes referred to and quoted it as addressed to the Christians of Laodicea. The probability is that it was an encyclical letter or circular intended for all the Churches of Asia, and primarily that of Ephesus. The title in the earlier copies (mystically explained by St. Basil, Eunom. lib. II. 2 p.733) purports that it is addressed to the Saints who *are*—omitting the name of any particular place—and the faithful in Christ Jesus. In verse 1 the blank is filled up with *at Ephesus*. At the conclusion the Apostle salutes not the Ephesians only, but all the Christians of Asia, and instead of writing, as usual, *peace to you*, he writes *peace to the brethren*. And it was sometimes spoken of as the Epistle to the Laodiceans, as by Tertullian, cont. Marcion. v. 11, 17, p. 598. See on this point M. de Tillemont, Mémoires &c., an. 49, p. 321, and *notes sur S. Paul*, 79, p. 613.

The Apostle had converted many of the Ephesians to the faith of Christ during a residence of three years in their city; and his present object is to confirm them in the faith and instruct them more fully in the sublimer

mysteries of the Christian religion. There was another and more urgent object which he has in view, for the faith of the Ephesian Christians was seriously imperilled by the efforts of the Judaizers on the one hand, and on the other by the followers of Simon Magus, whose wild errors, disguised under the veil of a subtle and imposing system of philosophy, were beginning to spread over the Roman Empire. They maintained, among other false doctrines which will have to be referred to further on, that angels, and not Christ, are the true mediators between God and man, and that it is to angels, and not to Christ, that we are to have recourse for reconciliation with God. The first three chapters of the Epistle treat of eternal predestination, of man's redemption by the death of Christ, of the vocation of the Gentiles, of the union of Gentiles and Jews, men and angels, under the sceptre of Christ, the great Head of the Church, who is raised above all creation. In the concluding chapters the Apostle lays down the principles and precepts of the Christian life in all its relations and conditions. For both the Judaizers and the followers of Simon erred alike, in manners as in faith.

The style of this Epistle, as every reader of it must have observed, differs conspicuously from that of all the other writings of St. Paul. Erasmus remarks that it would appear to have been written by another hand, were it not that its drift and meaning, and the doctrine it conveys, proceed evidently from the mind of St. Paul. The difference is ascribable to the more serious and terrible nature of the heresies which the Apostle is compelled to expose and refute. In addressing the Galatians, he could appeal to their common sense, almost their sense of ridicule, against the Judaic compliances which were exacted from them by worldly and self-seeking men, or in refutation of unfounded charges brought against himself.

But in repelling the awful and monstrous delusions, concealed under the guise of philosophy, which were put forward by the impiety of Simon and his adherents, he is compelled to ascend to the higher regions of theological truth, and use language of greater solemnity, not unlike that which was directed, a few years later, against the same or similar errors, by St. Peter and St. Jude, and in the second of his own Epistles to Timothy, and later still, by the Evangelist St. John. All early writers have noticed in the Epistle to the Ephesians a deeper wisdom, energy, and fervour, than in the others composed during the same period of imprisonment, as if the writer were panting after martyrdom, and breathed forth something of the divine fire and celestial illumination which enlightened and consumed his soul.

There is, however, some difference of opinion as to whether it was composed during St. Paul's first or second imprisonment at Rome, of which the latter terminated in his martyrdom. Theodoret (Preface to the Ep. of St. Paul) thinks it was written during the first imprisonment, and sent by Tychicus, together with the Epistle to the Colossians. Baronius (A.D. 62) also considers that it was written at that time, and sent by Tychicus, and with it the second Epistle to Timothy. Other writers also think that it was sent together with the second to Timothy, but that both were written during the second incarceration, and shortly before the Apostle's martyrdom, which took place June 29, 67. On this subject see M. de Tillemont, *note* 78 on St. Paul and *Mémoires*, tom. I.

CHAPTER I.

1. PAUL, Apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, to all the saints who are at Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus;

2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER I. In this chapter the Apostle declares the purpose of Almighty God, from all eternity, to call the Ephesian believers, and all other faithful followers of Jesus Christ, to grace and salvation; and prays that they may be enlightened to see the splendour and sublimity of this heavenly calling, and of the hope of sharing the greatness and felicity of Jesus Christ, seated in glory at the right hand of God.

I. *Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God.* This statement is frequently repeated by St. Paul, as at the beginning of both the Epistles to the Corinthians, that to the Colossians, &c. It implies that a vocation depending on *the will of God* is required for every minister of Christ, whether called to preach the Gospel or stand at the altar. It may suggest to every priest to consider and reflect upon the motives and circumstances which led him to enter the sacerdotal office, so that if he thinks there existed any defect in his vocation, it may be supplied by penance.

To all the saints. So also in both the Epistles to the Corinthians, and elsewhere. For all Christians are saints, and called to sanctity, though, it may be, in different

degrees. They came forth immaculate from the fount of baptism, and with that beginning a profane and worldly life can hardly be consistent. At least they should aspire in some degree to sanctity.

2. *Grace and peace.* St. Paul prays for grace and peace for his brethren, in almost all his Epistles. Grace and peace are what we should continually ask of Christ, for ourselves and others. Grace includes every gift necessary for eternal life ; peace is the firm, unshaken, and tranquil possession of these spiritual gifts.

3. Blessed the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in every spiritual benediction, in the heavenly places, in Christ.

4. As he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we might be holy and immaculate, in his sight, in charity.

3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* There is no verb in this sentence, either in the Vulgate or the Greek text. We may understand, either *blessed is*, or *blessed be*. It is a theological truth that God is, and ought to be, blessed ; the recognition of this truth is an act of piety in the creature towards the Creator. In this verse the Apostle *blesses* God, and affirms that God *has blessed us*. In the first, to *bless* means to praise, in the second it signifies to do good ; but both significations are radically the same, because to praise, and to do good, proceed alike from a good will, and have their origin in charity. We bless God, when we thank him for his benefits, and God blesses us when he bestows those benefits. For God's blessing confers good, in which it differs from the ineffectual, and sometimes false, benedictions of man.

In every spiritual benediction. The word *in* is redundant,

by a Hebrew idiom. *With* every spiritual benediction. In saying *spiritual* benediction, the Apostle means to contrast the blessings we receive from God, with those he promised to, and conferred upon, his ancient people, which were not spiritual, but material. He promised earthly blessings to the Jews, he has promised the heavenly to Christians. The New Testament is distant from the Old, as heaven from earth. In the ancient Scriptures, as for example in Lev. xxvi., Deut. vii., or xxviii., we find only earthly advantages secured or offered to the people of Israel. But, in reading the New Testament, we find no promises of terrestrial good. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Who loveth me, we will come and make our dwelling with him.* Matt. v. 3, Joh. xiv. 23. The followers of Christ are, on the contrary, warned to expect persecution and affliction. *You shall mourn and weep. In the world you shall have trouble.* Joh. xvi. 20, 33. The spirit of the Christian faith is to despise earth, and aspire to heaven, to be withdrawn from what is carnal, the more abundantly to possess that which is spiritual.

In the heavenly, understand *regions* or *palaces*, not literally but in figure, because the nature of *the heavenly* cannot be fully apprehended by our limited intelligence. God has blessed us in the heavenly places, because there he dwells; or more properly, has blessed us with celestial gifts which are one day to raise us to heaven.

In Christ. That is, through Christ; or by the faith of Christ; or because the possession of Christ is the promised blessing which awaits us in the heavenly places, whither he has ascended. The preposition *in* is omitted in the Greek, but probably by mistake of a transcriber, the expression as it stands being a solecism and ungrammatical. Christ is the means or channel by which every blessing of God reaches us; and

by which our praise and benediction ascends in answer to God. Through him, with him, and in him, is all honour and glory given to God omnipotent, not by man only, but by the holy Angels as well.

4. *As he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.* This particularizes and describes the *blessing* referred to in the last verse. God *chose us*, before the foundation of the world, in view of the merits of Christ, and for the sake of Christ; and having chosen us in eternity, has blessed us in time. The Greek word *καταβολή* signifies the laying of a foundation, literally, throwing down. As if, says St. Chrysostom, God had thrown down the universe from an infinite height, not locally, but on account of the immeasurable distance which separates the nature of the Creator from that of the creature.

That we might be holy and blameless in his sight. This is the object of our election, to be holy and blameless, not only in the sight of men, who may be deceived, but in that of God, who sees all things. *In charity*, because this is the crown and perfection of sanctification, and the means of attaining it. The Apostle does not assert that sanctification is the final end of our election, but it is the final end as regards this life. Or it may be considered as identical with the final beatification of soul and body in the presence of God, for which it is, in any point of view, essential. But St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and the Syriac version, take the words *in charity* as belonging to the next verse: who has predestinated us in charity, or love.

In order to understand these opening words of the Apostle, it may be useful to enumerate some of the shocking tenets of the heretics against whom this Epistle is directed, and which were more fully brought to light at a later period when they had been separated from the communion of the Church. These errors are fully detailed in the writings of Irenæus and St. Clement.

It will be sufficient to say here that the followers of Simon Magus maintained, 1. That the Creator of the world was not the Supreme Being, but an evil or imperfect principle or agent; 2. That he was the enemy of Christ, and brought him to the cross; 3. That the heirs of salvation have a divine or angelic nature, derived from spheres beyond the knowledge of the Creator; 4. That their salvation is, therefore, the result, not of election but of creation; 5. That it depends on destiny, not on the will of the Creator; 6. That sanctity, or obedience to the laws of the Creator of the world, is a degrading servitude, and the contrary is the characteristic of the sons of light; 7. That the rest of the race of mankind are not objects of charity, but of scorn and hate, like their Creator, and incapable of salvation; 8. That knowledge, not love, is the perfection of humanity and the inheritance of the Saints. These errors are combatted throughout the present Epistle; and in the two verses now under consideration St. Paul asserts, 1. That our Creator is *blessed*; 2. That *he has blessed us*, that is, all baptized Christians, *in Christ*; 3. That he has *chosen* us before creation; 4. That he has chosen us to salvation; 5. That he has chosen us for Christ's sake, from the foreknowledge that we should believe in Christ; 6. That he has chosen us to sanctification; 7. That sanctification is obtained and made perfect by *charity*; 8. That in *charity* he has predestinated us to life eternal.

To this may be added that the heretics appear to have considered the world to have existed from eternity, or at least the material from which it was framed, on which account St. Paul says that God *laid*, or cast down, *the foundations of the world*. And that angels, not Christ, are our true mediators with God; for which reason the Apostle avers that God has blessed us in heavenly places *in Christ*. It is possible that some of these wild opinions

may be faintly reflected in the heresies or philosophies of modern times, but for the most part they are obsolete and forgotten, and the chief interest of the Epistle to the Ephesians consists in the sublime and beautiful exposition of the Christian philosophy with which St. Paul has crushed and refuted them, in this magnificent treatise, and which he derived directly from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.

5. Who predestined us to the adoption of sons, through Jesus Christ, into him, according to the purpose of his will :

6. To the praise of the glory of his grace, whereby he made us gracious in his beloved Son.

5. *Who predestined us.* The Apostle borrows this word from the vocabulary of his opponents, who attributed everything in human life to *destiny*, or the influence of an inexorable fate determined by mysterious powers presiding over the birth of every individual, and whose dictates could not be escaped. But he uses the term in a sense of his own, very different from theirs, declaring that God has, from the beginning of the world, appointed or predestined believers in Christ, *to the adoption of sons*. The same *blessing* he has described before, and now expands in further detail ; to be *chosen to sanctity* is the same thing as to be *predestined to sonship*. For the saints are the sons of God. *Through*, by means of and for the sake of, *Jesus Christ, to him*. The Greek text, as we have it now, reads εἰς αὐτόν, *to himself* ; the translator of the Vulgate appears to have read εἰς αὐτόν, *to him*, that is, to Christ. *According to the purpose of his will*, or the good pleasure of his will, his own voluntary and spontaneous mercy and kindness, the sole origin and source of this infinite honour and benefit to man. It is clear that St. Paul understands that

this adoption to be sons of God had already been conferred upon the Ephesian Christians in the laver of regeneration, to which God had chosen or predestined them from eternity. This was the immediate object of their predestination and election, to which these tended ; and that he does not refer to any immediate election and predestination to glory, appears from these considerations.

1. The inscription, the Epistle being addressed to the *saints* and *faithful*, not to such as were chosen to glory.
 2. The words of the text : *predestined to sonship*, which is the privilege of all believers.
 3. The general tenor of the Epistle addressed to them. No one would venture to assert that none of the Ephesian Christians were damned ; that the object of St. Paul in writing it was to assure them of salvation unconditionally, or that he meant to make their election *to glory* patent and public to all the world. That their attainment of eternal glory was the end of their election, there is no doubt ; but it does not follow that the mode of arriving at grace and glory are the same. This is, however, another and more general question ; what is asserted here is that the Apostle is not treating of election or predestination to final glory, but election and predestination to the *adoption of sons*, which is the privilege of all baptized believers in Christ. They are *chosen to sanctity*. But it is evident, from the language of this Epistle, that the Ephesian Christians were not all *saints*. This election is not, therefore, absolute, but conditional. Absolute on the part of God, who gives the graces necessary for sanctity, but conditional, as assuming our own free co-operation with that grace.

6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace*. The Syriac : that the praise of his grace may be celebrated. The final cause and object of our election and salvation is, that for God's infinite love and mercy, praise and glory may be rendered to him by men and angels.

In which grace, or by which grace, he has made us gracious. endowed us with Christian graces, made us acceptable and beloved to himself, as his own sons. *Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and place a ring on his hand,* Luc. xv. 22. St. Chrysostom says: By this grace he not only freed us from our sins, but made us pleasing, and objects of love and affection to himself. As if he took up one who was foul and disfigured with pestilence, disease, and leprosy, enfeebled by age, ruined in fortune, and restoring him at once to youth, health, strength, and beauty, beyond all compare, and in the flower and fulness of his age, and the vigour of life, clothed him with purple, placed a jewelled diadem upon his head, surrounded him with state and splendour. Thus has God recreated and adorned the soul of man, and made it brilliant and beautiful, lovely, amiable, and desirable in his sight.

In his beloved Son. The word *Son* is omitted in the Greek. *In the Beloved.* The Syriac: *through his Beloved.* Christ is essentially and by excellence *the Beloved* of the Father. The felicity of Deity consists in the eternal affection that reigns between the Father and the Son. The Son beholds the fulness of the Father's glory; the Father sees his own infinite perfection perfectly reflected in the Son, his image and likeness. And through our union with Christ we also are beloved, rendered amiable, gracious, acceptable, to God the Father, *in the Beloved.* The false doctrine of the heretics, that the sons of light have by creation, and of themselves, a different nature from other men, the development of which must bring them to ultimate glory, is contradicted by this statement of the Apostle, that we are gracious and acceptable in the sight of God only for the sake of Christ, and through union with him.

7. In whom we have redemption through his blood,

the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

8. Which has over-abounded in us, in all wisdom and prudence.

The heretics, referring everything to fate, and regarding all human action as the inevitable outcome of the law of man's creation, did not believe either in sin, or the remission of sin. The sons of light could not sin, the ordinary run of mankind, the work of an evil creator, could do nothing good. The Apostle, therefore, insists on the reality, both of *sin*, and its *remission*. In Christ we have redemption, or deliverance, from sin and prospectively all other ill or evil. In the Greek, *the ransom or cleansing*, through the blood of Christ, *for the remission of sins*. *According to the riches of his grace*, that is, by the abundance of his mercy. The riches of God is the riches of his mercy. St. Chrysostom remarks that the Apostle seems here to be going back from the greater to the less, for having spoken of election to sanctification and predestination to the adoption of sons, he now tells us of *the remission of sin*. But it is not so, for in truth he is ascending from the little to the great. Nothing else is so great as the shedding of the blood of God; no mercy or blessing so high as that it was shed for us. Greater than even the adoption to be his sons, and all God's other gifts, is this, that for us he spared not his own Son. Remission of sins is called *redemption*, on account of the infinite value of the price paid for it, the blood of the only-begotten Son of God. A price in proportion to *the riches of God's grace*. But if God gave his Son to death for sinners, when his enemies: what may we not expect that he will do, from the riches of his grace, for those who are now *gracious in the Beloved*?

8. This grace of God is abundant in all Christian people, as appeared by the miracles which the Spirit of God enabled them to work, so frequently and constantly,

in the Apostolic age. But it abounded still more, or overabounded, in *us* the Apostles of Christ, who were supernaturally endowed with *wisdom*, or the knowledge of divine things, and *prudence*, the knowledge how to act, or direct others to act. For God imparted to the founders of his Church a more perfect insight into heavenly mysteries, that they might instruct others in the faith, and practical wisdom to guide the Church of God. St. Anselm observes that St. Paul says this because there were many so-called philosophers at Ephesus, who boasted that they were the only wise men living, and in order to attract the confidence and attention of the Ephesians to the words he was addressing to them.

9. That he might make known to us the sacrament of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him.

10. In dispensation of the fulness of the times, to restore all things in Christ which are in heaven and which are in earth, in him :

11. In whom we also were called by lot, being predestined according to the purpose of him who operates all things after the counsel of his will ;

12. That we may be for the praise of his glory, who were the first to have hope in Christ.

9. *That he might make known to us.* The Greek has, when he had made known to us, the mystery of his will. In these four verses the Apostle explains the economy or purpose of God in first communicating the message of redemption to the Apostles, and thereby constituting them the teachers of the nations, to whose voice, consequently, the Ephesians might reasonably be expected to listen. God endowed them with wisdom and prudence, and made

known to them the hidden mystery of his will, which was to reconcile and redeem through Christ not the Jews only, but all tribes and nations of mankind. This was owing solely to the charity, kindness, and love of God, the *good* pleasure which he purposed *in himself*. This is the reading of the Greek text, but the Vulgate reads *in him*, that is in Christ, and this Cornelius à Lapide thinks more in accordance with the Apostle's probable meaning and intention. St. Chrysostom says that the mystery of the divine will, made known to the Apostles for the instruction of the world, was the Incarnation of the Word of God, an intention so involved previously in silence and darkness that not men only, but the angels also, were ignorant of it, until it was accomplished. A mystery, the understanding of which invested with wisdom and prudence the minds to whom the knowledge of it was communicated. *Not flesh and blood has revealed it to thee, but my Father in heaven.*

10. And that which God revealed to the Apostles was, his intention *in the dispensation* or economy of the fulness of the times, when what he saw to be the fitting time had arrived, to renew, restore, collect and rally, under the sceptre of Christ, and in the embrace of the same divine charity which unites the Father and the Son, all things in heaven and earth, angels and men, Gentiles and Jews. Christ is *the head over all the Church*, and to him all power is given, in heaven and earth. All things in heaven, because the ruin of the fallen angels is repaired from the ranks of the human species. Men are raised thither, says St. Anselm, whence the apostate angels fell. On earth, because sinners are converted to justice. Heaven and earth are now one family in Christ. Angels are our brethren, Christ our Father and head. Christians on earth, of whatever nation, are one people of God, united in his service. Raised to so great an honour, says St.

Chrysostom, let us do no disgrace to him who has so dignified and distinguished us, nor allow so great a favour to be bestowed on us in vain. Associated with angels, let us lead an angelic life. Let not our advancement be our judgment and condemnation, but let us rather enter freely and generously on the enjoyment of the high destiny to which God's grace has called us.

11. *In whom we also have obtained an inheritance.* The Apostle repeats at the end of the last verse, *in him*, that is in Christ, alone, not by any angel or created spiritual power. In the Incarnate Word of God, we the Apostles, and others of our nation, obtained our share in God's inheritance. It would seem that in very ancient times inheritances were distributed by lot, for which reason the Greek term *to inherit* means literally to obtain by lot. By the lot of God's appointment, the message of salvation was first communicated to the Jewish nation, among whom Christ spent his mortal life, and to which all the Apostles belonged. Not by virtue of any superior merit, for we were, as it were, *called by lot*. But this was *according to the purpose*, election, predestination, and decree of the Almighty, by whose all-powerful will and unerring wisdom all things are guided and directed, and not by any accident.

12. *That we might be to the praise of his glory.* In order that we, the Jews, who were the first to believe in Christ, and embrace the glorious hope of everlasting life to be attained through him, might be the means of extending God's praise and glory in the world, by making known to all other nations the grace we have received from Christ, and the Gospel of his salvation. It is possible that the Greeks of Ephesus, proud of the antiquity of their famous city, their attainments in literature and philosophy, and a certain lustre derived by reflection from the imposing worship of their world-celebrated temple, resented the introduc-

tion of a new religion brought by foreigners from the East, and the Apostle consequently justifies in this apology the economy of God, who had purposely adopted this means of making the message of salvation known to the nations. He goes on to show that the gifts and graces of God were poured forth in ample measure upon the Gentile nations also, in the following verses.

13. In whom you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and in whom also believing, were sealed with the Spirit of promise, the Holy,

14. Who is the pledge of our inheritance, for the redemption of the acquisition, to the praise of his glory.

13. In verse 11 the Apostle said, *in whom we also have obtained an inheritance*. Here he adds, *in whom also you*. What he said before of the Jews he now says of the Gentiles. *When you heard the word of truth*, the word of Christ, who is Truth. The word of Christ is truth, 1. Because he is truth. 2. Because it contains no errors, as the doctrines of philosophy often did. 3. Because it reveals divine things openly, not in shadows and figures, like the old Law. It is *the Gospel of your salvation*; *he who believes, shall be saved*. And having heard the word of Christ by the preaching of the Apostles, *and believing it*, in the Greek *having believed*, or given your assent to it, you were *in Christ (in quo)* united to him by faith and the grace of baptism, you were sealed, in Baptism and Confirmation, with the Holy Spirit promised of old by the Prophets (Ezech. xxxvi. 26, Joel ii. 28) and by Christ (Luc. xxiv. 49) and therefore called the Spirit of promise, *the Holy*, the source of sanctity. The Jews, St. Chrysos-

tom says, were marked outwardly in the flesh, like sheep or cattle, Christians within by the Holy Spirit.

14. The Holy Spirit is *the pledge of our inheritance*. His interior gifts, charity, justice, peace, joy, and the exterior gifts of miracles, are a part of your eternal inheritance given in advance as a *pledge* of the remainder, to be given in eternity, until such time as God shall complete and accomplish *the redemption of the Acquisition*, or of the people he has acquired or purchased. This *redemption* consists, for the present, in freedom from the service of sin, but it will not be complete until God shall have set his people free from all evil for ever and given them possession of eternal glory.

The *redemption of the acquisition*, therefore, means here full and absolute emancipation from all infirmities of soul and body, at the resurrection to eternal life. And the Holy Spirit is given us, 1. as a *seal* in confirmation and assurance of our adoption to be the sons of God. 2. as a *pledge* of our right of succession in the future to the inheritance of God our Father, until that redemption is made perfect and complete. We are sealed that we may be assured we are God's people now, and that we shall rise hereafter to everlasting life and glory.

To the praise of his glory. This is the third time we have met with this expression. In verse 6 the Apostle says that God predestined us to adoption, to *the praise of the glory* of his grace. In verse 12, *we*, the Jews, obtained this inheritance, *to the praise of his glory*. Here, the supreme and final end of the redemption of God's acquisition, from all nations of the earth alike, is *the praise of his glory*. As if not satisfied with being glorious in himself, God desires to have that glory seen, acknowledged, admired, and praised, by his creatures. For this he made the world. It is his reward for creation; it is also the supreme felicity of the creature, and the occupation

of Saints and Angels for eternity. For the creature, rational and intelligent, has nothing in itself which satisfies it, nor is capable of receiving that satisfaction in anything else that is finite and created. Only the infinite glory of God can fill its aspirations, and the tribute of its homage is rendered to its Creator in praise.

15. On this account I also, hearing of your faith, which is in the Lord Jesus, and your love to all the saints.

16. Do not cease giving thanks for you, making memory of you in my prayers.

17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the recognition of him ;

15. *On this account*, because God has called you, and you have received the Gospel, and are sealed with the Holy Spirit, and because God is willing to receive the praise due for his gifts. Then follows the parenthesis : since I heard of your faith *which is in the Lord Jesus*. Some years had elapsed since the Apostle visited Ephesus, and there had probably been a large accession of believers since that date, whose conversion was a fact well known, and realized thankfully as a great mercy of God, by all the Catholic Church. Hearing of your faith and charity towards all Christians. Faith and charity, St. Chrysostom remarks, are a well matched and noble pair of coursers, for without charity faith is dead, and will never reach the goal.

16. *Cease not giving thanks*, the Vulgate here adopts the Greek idiom, *Cease not to give thanks*. *Remembering you in my prayers*. The Greek word for giving thanks is εὐχαριστῶν, I remember you daily in offering the Holy

Sacrifice, in thanksgiving to God for your faith, and prayer for your perseverance.

17. *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory.* This seems to be a Hebraism, for *Father most glorious*. Or, as Ambrose thinks, the Father of all greatness, power, and dignity. Or possibly, the Father of Christ, who is the splendour of his glory. Will give you wisdom to see and understand the grandeur and sublimity of the Christian vocation, the wonderful and supernatural graces with which God has endowed you, the inconceivable glory and happiness which awaits you. All which is included in the knowledge of God, because it is from the infinite charity of God that these proceed. Of this knowledge he prays that they may have a larger and increasing share. For he who knows God aright, says St. Chrysostom, will never doubt the truth of any of his promises.

18. The eyes of your heart illuminated, that you may know what is the hope of his vocation, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints,

19. And what is the sovereign greatness of his might towards us who believe according to the operation of the power of his strength,

20. Which he operated in Christ, raising him from the dead, and placing him on his right hand in the heavenly regions,

21. Above all principality, and power, and strength, and dominion, and every name which is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

18. I pray that God would give illumination to the eyes of your heart, or your interior vision. The Greek has *the eyes of your mind*. (The Vulgate substitutes *heart*, but

the *heart* is not in Latin, as in French, the seat of the *affections*, but of the intellect and power of mental perception). That you may understand *the hope of his vocation*, a Hebraism for the thing hoped for. The greatness of those good things to which he has called us, and which he has bidden us hope for. And the abundance of that rich and glorious inheritance of bliss which he has prepared for the Saints hereafter. For without the light of grace we cannot know either (1) the excellence of the Christian vocation, or (2) the richness of the inheritance to which we are called, or (3) the miracle of our justification, which is an evidence of divine power as great and wonderful as that which was exhibited in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, as is explained in the next verse.

19. The supreme, supereminent, victorious grandeur of that power which God exercised *in us who believe*, that is in bringing us from unbelief to faith. There is another explanation of these words, which is adopted by Ambrose and St. Thomas, and among modern writers by Cajetan and Estius, viz., that great and crowning miracle of divine power which God will one day exert, towards us believers, in raising our bodies from the grave, a power similar to, or parallel with, that which he put in exercise at the resurrection of Christ. The former interpretation, however, appears the more probable, in view of the comparison instituted in the next chapter between the resurrection of Christ and the justification of the faithful. It must also be considered what was the condition of the world at that period, wholly in *the power of the evil one*, overrun with idolatry, magic, and every kind of wickedness. Yet God converted many of these people to the faith of Christ, sanctity of life, the true worship of God. This was a miracle not less wonderful than the resurrection of Christ. The natural world submits mechanically to God's commands; but the heart of man

resists and rebels. It is commonly said that to make a sinner just is more difficult than to create heaven and earth. 1. Because sin and grace are more opposed than existence and non-existence; 2. because sin and the sinner are further removed from God than *nothing*. For God and sin are the two furthest possible extremes. 3. Because grace and justice belong to the divine and supernatural order. It requires, therefore, the highest exercise of divine power for man, fallen through sin below the level of all other creatures, to rise to grace, partake of the divine nature, become God's son and heir. All this will explain why the Apostle says that the spiritual resurrection of himself and the Christians of Ephesus was a miracle of divine power not less wonderful than Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead. Photius and some others understand the great strength of God, exhibited in the faith and justification of us who believe in the operation of his power, shown in the resurrection of Christ. That is, our belief in Christ's resurrection is the cause of our justification, which sense of the words seems to be favoured by the Arabic translation. But the former, which we have adopted, is the interpretation of St. Chrysostom and Theophylact, as well as of many modern writers.

20. The strength and energy (*ἐνέργεια*) which God exhibited in raising us to grace from sin, idolatry, and hell, resembles, says St. Chrysostom, that which he showed when he raised Christ from the grave and placed him on his own right hand, his equal in power and divinity, though wearing the form of a servant.

21. *Above all principality.* The Greek, more than above, far above, in the highest height above, all the orders and choirs of Angels, whether Principalities, or Powers, or Virtues, or Dominions, whatever name, dignity, office, or excellence they may bear, unknown to us, but

which possibly we shall know in *the world to come*. Every name stands for every power, authority, or excellence, whether angelic or human, in heaven or earth.

The reason for the introduction of this description of the supereminent dignity and splendour of the position to which Christ is raised in heaven, is explained in the next chapter, where, in verses 5 and 6, St. Paul declares that in the resurrection of Christ, and in his glory at the right hand of God in heaven, his faithful people share, by destination even now, and will share in actual reality in eternity. Wonderful and inconceivable as is the elevation of human nature at the head and summit of all creation in the person of Jesus Christ, it is at the same time an infinite condescension for Deity, because the nature of God is infinitely removed above all created natures, even that of the highest spirits of heaven.

22. And subjected all things under his feet: and gave him head over all the Church,

23. Which is his body, and the plentitude of him who is completed in all things by all.

22. God has *subjected all things*, or placed all things, *under his feet*. Hence St. Chrysostom concludes that Christ, even as man, is king and lord of heaven and earth. *All power is given to me*. But as regards the exercise of this power all things are not as yet subject, as is observed in Heb. ii. 8. Evil spirits and evil men will be subdued by the power of Christ only at the end of the world.

And gave him as head over all the Church. The Greek text has : *and gave him to the Church as her head over all*, or supreme head. The Syriac reads : *and him, who is over all, he gave to the Church as her head*. All the Church, including men and angels, militant and triumphant.

23. *Which is his mystical body*, and perfection or complement, as the body is the necessary complement of the head. For the head would be powerless without the body, and the body useless without the head, and the head is perfect or *completed*, when it has the members of the body attached to it.

Who is completed as to all things by all. Christ is completed, says Theophylact, as to the hand, by a liberal almsgiver; as to the feet, by one who goes on pilgrimage for love of him, or visits the sick; as to the tongue, by the teacher of the Church. The Syriac takes the verb in the active: *who fills all things in all men.* The Greek verb will bear either sense. Grotius, who takes it actively, says that this use of the word is an Attic idiom. The head may be said to *fill* the body by supplying its nervous action. So Christ *fills* the minds of the faithful with light, their hearts with pious affections, their souls with supernatural and spiritual gifts.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

God predestined thee from eternity, because he loved thee. Not only in general was it his purpose through Christ to bring many sons to glory; but each one, singly and separately, was the special object of his affection, his preparation by his Providence, his design of redemption. He thought of *thee*, in the ages before the world was, and when thou hadst as yet no being, and no merit, chose thee among many others in Christ, and for Christ. And to what art thou chosen? To be holy and spotless in his sight, and therefore like God, who is holy and spotless. Here is honour. To be his adopted son and heir, the owner and possessor of the riches of eternity. Here is happiness. There is no other honour, and there is no

other happiness. And this predestination, formed in eternity, and from eternity, he has in time carried out. For in the fountain of regeneration he made thee holy and spotless. Spotless, because washed from sin in the blood of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Holy, because the grace of the Holy Spirit was there abundantly shed forth on thee, with all spiritual and heavenly benediction. First, by this sanctifying grace thy soul is made like God, and restored to his image and likeness, thou art made *gracious* in his sight, and become the friend of God. Next, thou art united to Christ, and thus become the child of God, and co-heir with Christ of the joys of heaven. And lastly, the Spirit of God, thus imparted to thee, is the pledge of this inheritance and assurance of its future completion. More than this, consistently with the law of creation, and the conditions under which the world consists, even God's omnipotence could not do. To have added earthly and temporal pleasures and advantages to these higher gifts, would only have been to insult and degrade the immortal heir of glory, whom it is his delight to honour, to treat the adopted son as but a servant after all. God has done all, and is doing all, for the present, and what he has done and given is the pledge and earnest of the rest which he will give and do hereafter. With perfect trust and confidence thou canst commit thy soul to him, as to a *faithful Creator*.

CHAPTER II.

1. AND you, when you were dead in your faults and sins,

2. In which at one time you walked according to the age of this world, according to the prince of the power of this air, the spirit who now operates upon the sons of unbelief,

3. In which all we also at one time lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the thoughts; and were by nature sons of wrath, even as the others.

CHAPTER II. In this chapter the Apostle contrasts the lost and miserable condition of the pagan world with the inconceivably high and glorious privileges of the Christian who is united to Jesus Christ by faith and baptism.

1. *And you.* This is in the objective case, and is governed by the verbs *convivificavit* and *conresuscitavit* (in Latin) verses 5 and 6, the intervening words forming a series of relative and dependent sentences. In the last chapter St. Paul declared that the conversion of the Ephesians was an exercise of God's power as great as, and similar to, that which was shown in raising Christ from the dead: of which resurrection it should be remembered that Saint Paul himself was a witness, having seen our Lord in the body, two years subsequently to his death on the cross. In the first six verses of this chapter he dwells on and expands the comparison, beginning by a

description in this verse of their condition before their conversion, and living in paganism, as like that of the dead. *When you were dead* spiritually, being deprived of the grace of God, which is the life of the soul, *in your faults and sins*, your sins of omission and commission, as St. Thomas says.

2. *In which at one time you walked.* As the expression *in delictis et peccatis vestris* denotes the multiplicity of sin among the pagans, so the expression *ambulâstis*, you walked, denotes its persistency and habitual character. In which sins you long lived and continued, following the fashions and vanities of this transitory world, with reference to which St. John says, *love not the world*, and as the more real though hidden instigating cause, obeying the guidance of the devil, the spirit who still, in the pagan world, rules, works and dominates in the souls of men who are unbelieving, unfaithful and disobedient to their Creator. For when man revolts from God he falls under the dominion of the devil.

The prince of the power of this air. The air is not, any more than the other elements, materially subject to the power of the devil, for all the material universe serves its Creator mechanically. The expression is probably figurative, as representing the universal prevalence of sin in the human soul, as if it were the air we breathe. The word *power* seems to bear the same sense as in i. 21, all principality and *power*, the singular being used for the plural. The prince of the powers who exercise dominion in this air. It is just possible there may be an indirect allusion to the prevalent worship of Zeus or Jupiter, the god of the air. See Acts xix. 35. *Sons of unbelief* is a Hebraism, like *sons of wrath*, in the next verse.

3. To soften this terrible picture of the former condition of the Ephesians, the Apostle here observes that it is equally applicable to the Jews, not excluding himself,

although the general tenor of his argument, as will appear from the application of it in the next chapter, has reference to the Gentile converts only, or especially. In which sins and offences we also, all of us, at one time lived, following the desires, and the perverted will, of the *flesh* and of the *mind*, according to the distinction of various kinds of concupiscence into *carnal* and *spiritual*, such as envy, ambition, and the like. We were plainly and simply children of wrath, like the pagans, and were nothing else. Deserving and liable to the anger and wrath of God. *By nature* may signify the nature of sin we inherit from Adam ; or the inclination to it which is a phenomenon of human life. The Apostle is not, however, here referring to original, but to actual sin, and probably means to say that we were evidently and completely *sons of wrath*. The Greek word is *φύσει*. The Syriac renders it *evidently*. The old Latin versions, cited by St. Jerome, have *plenè* and *omnino*. Theophylact, truly and genuinely. St. Chrysostom : We were wrath and nothing else. As who is born of human parents is man, and only man, so we were wrath, and only wrath.

4. But God, who is rich in mercy, on account of the too great charity with which he loved us,

5. Even when we were dead in sins, brought us to life with Christ, by whose grace you are saved ;

6. And with him raised us from death, and seated us with him in the heavenly, in Christ Jesus.

4. *God who is rich in mercy.* God is rich, as the owner of all the universe, but his principal riches is his mercy. *On account of the too great charity with which he loved us* The Greek has, *the great charity*, the Syriac, the immense charity with which he loved mankind. God's charity is

too great, relatively to us, for it was *too great charity* to sacrifice his only begotten Son for enemies and sinners.

5. *Even when we were*, we Jews and you Gentiles, *dead in sins*, as described in verse 1, God gave us life in Christ and together with Christ, when he raised Christ from the grave. The Greek has *gave us life with Christ*, the preposition *in* being added by the Vulgate. What Christ received at the resurrection was the life of the body, what we received in Baptism was the life of the soul. The one is the cause of the other. *By whose grace you are saved*. The Greek omits *whose*. You are saved, that is your salvation is begun, by grace, not by *destiny*, or any law of your creation giving you a different nature from other men.

6. *And with him raised us from death*. The resurrection of the soul in Baptism will be followed by the resurrection of the body at the last day, and both in consequence of the resurrection of Christ. This has already been accomplished in promise. And as the resurrection of Christ, so also his ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of God. The *convivificavit* belongs to the soul, the *conresuscitavit* to the body, the *consedere fecit* to both. The past is used for the future, for the certitude of the hope, says St. Thomas. And the right of possession is taken for the possession itself. *God has seated us with Christ in the heavenly places*, that is in heaven, or as in the Greek, in the places *above the heavens*.

7. That he might show in the ages to come the abundant riches of his grace, in his goodness upon us in Christ Jesus.

8. For by grace you are saved through faith; and this not of you, for it is the gift of God.

9. Not of works, that none may boast.

7. All this God has done, in order that to the cen-

turies now to follow, until the end of the world, he may exhibit his boundless munificence in the kindness he has conferred upon us through Jesus Christ. St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and some other writers, understand by the *ages that are to come*, the eternity that is to follow the resurrection. But though the statement, so understood, would be true, it seems more in accordance with the mind of St. Paul to understand it as referring to the centuries which are passing in the history of the Church on earth.

8. *You are saved*, that is justified, *by faith*. This is the beginning of salvation. And it did not begin with you, for faith itself is *the gift of God*. *You are saved*, so far as God can save you, for the completion of your salvation depends upon your co-operation with the grace of God, and the consent of your will with his.

9. You are saved by faith, *not by works* preceding faith. The Apostle does not assert that good works have no bearing on salvation, for in fact obedience to the laws of God is an indispensable condition of it. But works, however good in themselves, which precede faith, and do not therefore proceed from faith, are not effectual to salvation. Faith is the beginning of justification. Neither was it for any such works that God gave you faith. *That none may boast*. Some of the Ephesian converts may possibly have boasted of the sanctity and purity of their lives in the days of their paganism, previous to their acceptance of the faith of Christ, at least in comparison with others. Or there may be some irony in the words of the Apostle. The whole of the argument in these verses is introductory to the practical conclusions drawn in chapter iv. The purity of life which God requires of you is not a development of philosophical virtues you may have exhibited, more or less perfectly, in former times; or in my own case, of my obedience to the ancient law. Rather, we were all then alike in a condition of sin and

death. It is a new life, springing from the faith which made you capable of receiving God's grace in Baptism, similar to, and dependent on, the resurrection of Christ from the grave, and which will not cease to carry you nearer and nearer to God until it leaves you enthroned with Christ in glory on the right hand of the Majesty above the heavens.

10. For we are his own work, created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God prepared that we might walk in them.

10. *For we are God's work*, his creation, his workmanship, the thing which his hands have made. But this is said here, not of natural creation, but of regeneration. The spiritual life infused into us by faith is as real, as new, as completely a new creation, as the animal life which God breathed into the insensible form of our first father in the garden of Eden. Regeneration, says St. Chrysostom, is real creation, for by it we are brought out of nothing, and are a new creature, and for this purpose, that we may exist. As to what we were before, we are dead, that is the old man is dead ; what we were not before, we have become. This creation is therefore more recent, and far nobler and fairer than the old. For of old we were created to live, now we are created to live *well*. Let, therefore, no one *glory*, for the thing created can boast only of its Creator, not of itself. The justification of the sinner is not a physical creation, literally from nothing, but a moral creation, from no antecedent merit ; wholly attributable to the merit of Christ, as physical creation is wholly attributable to the omnipotence of God.

In good works. The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions all have *or good works*. The Greek preposition is

ἐπί, and Cornelius à Lapide, Grotius, and Erasmus, give many proofs that this preposition used as in this phrase, has the meaning of *for* or with *a view to*. Having stated in verse 9 that we are saved by faith, not by works, that is works antecedent to faith, lest this should be misunderstood, the Apostle adds that we are expressly created for good works following faith. Not ἐξ ἔργων, but ἐπὶ ἔργοις.

11. On this account remember and bear in mind, that you Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh done with hands.

12. That you were at that time without Christ, alienated from the conversation of Israel, and strangers to the testaments, having not the hope of the promise, and without God in this world.

13. But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were afar off, have been brought near, in the blood of Christ.

11. *On this account*, that you may better understand the immense benefit and advantage you have received by your regeneration, remember and bear in mind your former lost and hopeless condition, and your happy deliverance from it. You, who were Gentiles in carnal origin and by hereditary descent, *in the flesh*, were without any knowledge of Christ or faith in him. You were without a God, in reality atheists, for the gods you worshipped had no real existence. There cannot be a greater misery than for the soul of man to be without God, in whom alone it can find satisfaction, and without Christ, who is the interpreter and revealer to creation of the love of God. Even if a man could gain the whole world, and possess for eternity every pleasure created things could afford, these would soon cease to please, because nothing that is finite can fill the desires of the human soul, but leaves him

in desolation and completely miserable. What does it profit, if a man gain all the world, and lose his soul? You had the world, but had lost God. *In mundo, sine Christo, sine Deo.* And even that incomplete and partial knowledge of the true God, and of Christ the coming Saviour of the world, which was retained among the people of the Jews, to facilitate the fulfilment of the promises made in ancient days, you, the Gentiles, did not possess. The inheritors of *the circumcision*—not the spiritual circumcision of the heart, which is the privilege of the Christian, but the outward circumcision *made with hands*—stigmatized you as *the uncircumcision*. You were alienated from the conversation of Israel, the chosen people of God, who were prohibited from entering into treaties of alliance with the Gentile nations (Deut. vii. 2) strangers to the covenants made with the nation of the Israelites, ignorant of the promise God had made to Abraham, to bless all the nations of the earth. (You were the nations of the earth, yet you lived throughout its wide extent, *in hoc mundo*, ignorant of its Creator.) All this you may usefully remember, in contrast with the position you now hold, in God's sight.

There are three ways of recalling sin, one evil, the second dangerous, the third useful and advantageous. To remember sin with complacence, is mortal sin renewed, and incurs its guilt and malice over again. To remember sin with disquiet and distrust is dangerous, hindering progress and causing peril of relapse. To remember sin with contrition and gratitude for its forgiveness, increases grace, and glorifies God. It is this to which the Apostle invites the Ephesian Christians.

But remember also that from the time you believed in Christ, the blood of Christ has won for you, and conferred upon you, all that was wanting to you before. You who

were banished from God, from Christ, from the covenants, the promise, the society of Israel, from hope of salvation, are brought near to God, made one with Christ, become heirs of his promise of everlasting life, brought into the communion of the Holy Catholic Church, raised to heaven in anticipation and with Christ seated at God's right hand in glory. There is evidently some strong reason which leads the Apostle to insist on enforcing the belief of the high privileges which the Christian faith had procured for the Ephesians, and that either Jewish influence or the pernicious doctrines of the heretics against whom this Epistle is principally directed, were dangerously likely to lead them to distrust the grace of Jesus Christ and the efficacy of the Sacraments of the Christian Church. The heretics made salvation dependent upon the acceptance of some hidden wisdom which they professed themselves able to impart, and which constituted the only true illumination of the soul.

14. For he is our peace, who made the two into one, destroying also the dividing wall of the building, the enmities in his own flesh.

15. Abolishing the law of commandments by decrees ; to build up the two in himself into one new man, making peace.

16. And reconcile both in one body, to God through the cross, killing the enmities in himself.

17. And he came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and peace to those who were near.

14. He is our peacemaker or pacificator, who has not only reconciled us to God, but as a result of this reconciliation has conciliated the Jews and Gentiles together, and made them one people. And the wall of partition (the law of Moses) which separated Jews and Gentiles, he destroyed by the death which he suffered in his flesh

abolished and replaced the law of commandments by the dogmas of the Gospel, so as to unite both Jews and Gentiles into one Church, which is figuratively one body, and *new*, founded by his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, reconciling them to God by the cross, by which he slew, at his own death, the enmities of former ages. And coming into this world he preached peace, by his Apostles to you who were at a distance, in his own person to the Jews, among whom he lived. There is therefore no ground for jealousy on your part, because the Gospel of God reached you through the preaching of Apostles who are all Jews. That was an economy of God to facilitate the establishment in the world of the truth of Christ's resurrection, But Jews have no privileges in the Church of Christ which are not extended in equal measure to the Gentiles, and both are one people and one body in the faith of Jesus Christ.

The word *maceria* signifies a wall built of uncemented stone, and therefore easily destroyed. The Judaic law, says Theophylact, was a congeries of precepts, not bound together by charity, for the motive of obedience was not love, but fear. Christ by his death broke down, *solvens*, this law, while at the same time he fulfilled it. Christ, says the writer just quoted, dissolved the shadows of the law of ceremonies, while at the same time he exhibited its divine authority by the fulfilment of it; as a painter putting the finishing touches to his picture fills, while he obliterates, the outline his own hand has traced.

15. *Abolished the law of commandment, by decrees.* The Greek has *in dogmas*. The Syriac: Abolished the law of precepts by precepts of his own. The Arabic: Abrogated the law of commandments by his own decrees. The term *dogma* was popularly applied to the doctrines of the philosophical sects of that day; the Apostle here uses it to denote the truths of heaven, made known by Jesus Christ.

Almost all the interpreters, ancient and modern, understand the words in this sense; but Erasmus, Cajetan, Menochius, and Tyrinus read it, *the law of commandments contained in decrees*. The law of Moses contained a multiplicity of precepts relating to things indifferent in themselves, sacred days, victims to be offered in sacrifice, meats to be avoided, &c., all which Christ abrogated by *the law of faith*. This, therefore, the older interpretation, seems to be more in accordance with the usual teaching of St. Paul.

16. *Killing the enmitics in himself*. St. Jerome and the yrian version both read *in it*, that is in the cross, but the sense of both readings is nearly the same. It is to be observed that the participles *dissolving, abolishing, making peace, coming*, are all in the past tense, in the Greek. The Latin language has no past active participle, and accordingly we have them in the Vulgate in the present tense.

17. *Coming, he preached peace*. An allusion to the words of the Angel in Luc. ii. 10, 14. *I bring you good tidings of joy, peace on earth*. Christ also himself preached peace to the nations; many shall come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, Matt. viii. 2. This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached all over the world, for a testimony to all nations, Matt. xxiv. 14. I will draw all to me, John xii. 32. Go and teach all the nations, Matt. xxviii. 19. Christ therefore preached peace to them that were afar off, as well as to them that were near.

18. Because through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

19. Therefore now you are not strangers and foreigners, but you are citizens of the saints, and domestics of God.

20. Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, the highest stone of the corner being Jesus Christ.

21. In whom the whole building constructed grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22. In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.

18. The fruit of the Incarnation of Christ is that we are permitted with confidence to approach God as our Father, through the Spirit, by whose teaching we say *Our Father*.

19. *You were strangers*, v. 12. *You were without God*, v. 12, *far from God*, v. 13. You are now no longer strangers and foreigners, but *citizens*; the Greek, *fellow-citizens with the Saints*. The Syriac: *Sons of the city of the Saints, and sons of the house of God*. Members of his Church, which is God's house and family.

20. *Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*. For what the Apostles proclaimed, the Prophets had foretold, and the foundations laid by the Apostles had been prepared by the Prophets. In 1 Cor. iii. 11, Christ is spoken of as the *foundation* of the Church. The same figure is here varied, for the foundation is the teaching of Prophets and Apostles, and Christ is the *corner stone*, placed on the summit of the building, its crown and completion. For the Apostles laid the foundations on earth, and Christ will come from heaven to finish and crown their work. The placing of the corner stone on a public building, as the last completion of the structure, was an occasion of public ceremony and rejoicing. The stone which the builders rejected, is placed on the head of the corner, Ps. cxvii. 22. He shall bring out the corner stone, and give grace for grace, Zech. iv. 7.

21. Bound together and compacted by the corner stone, or as we say the key-stone, the whole building is

rising into a consecrated temple of God, who dwells in it by his Spirit, and of this temple you and other nations of the Gentile world, hereafter to be converted, form a part.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

To be *without God* is to be in hell. The world is in hell already, in so far as it is without God, although worldly men are unconscious of the fate towards which they are being carried forward to the brink of the cataract. They have only to continue as they are, and their pursuit of riches and ambition, pleasure and delight in transitory things, will carry them on to the condition in which all this will be over, and they will have no interest to occupy them for eternity, only an infinite blank, a hopeless desolation, an unending despair. All other torments of hell are insignificant compared with this. The Saints have sometimes been instructed by visions of hell, and colloquies with lost souls which either are real, or drawn from the depth of their piety and insight into the great realities of eternity, but in every case the lost have testified that they suffer, and can suffer, no torment worthy of comparison with the infinite and hopeless desolation of a soul deprived of God. A great preacher put into the mouth of a lost soul these words : let thousands of demons, and thousands more, torment me for eternity, if only I am not for ever deprived of God. If for the torments of hell were substituted the joys of heaven, and that for eternity, the soul would be no happier in heaven than in hell, without God. For the human soul is formed for the love of God, and nothing else will satisfy it. It is not only that earthly pleasures pass away. Were they enduring, they would occasion still greater pain, for the soul itself becomes weary of pleasure, of change, of everything but God. Most terrible of all, for the soul which has once been united to God through Christ. For eternity will the contemptuous reproach of

fellow-sufferers, not so happy, be ringing in his ears. Once you were a Christian, a member of Christ, a son of God, an heir of God, a co-heir with Christ, an associate with his Saints. And lo ! you are cut off from Christ's body, shut out from God's promises, cut off for ever from the society of the holy ; without a country, without friends, without hope of salvation in Christ, *without God !*

CHAPTER III.

1. FOR this thing's sake I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.

CHAPTER III. While the Epistle to the Ephesians is to be regarded as a sublime exposition of the higher Christian philosophy, its arrangement is singularly characteristic of the writer, and singularly unlike any other writer. The great truths and lofty thoughts of which his mind was full, he appears to write down as they occur to him, without attention to the niceties of construction, and on a system, or disregard of system, all his own. He appears to consider the first two chapters as introductory, and enters on his subject again at this point, with a fresh presentation of himself as the writer. But even here he immediately begins another parenthesis, and there is great difference of opinion as to where he resumes the thread of his argument in a formal manner. The whole of this chapter may be regarded as parenthetical, and the words *for this cause, hujus rei gratia*, as ushering in the practical exhortation on which he enters at the beginning of ch. iv. Or the parenthesis may be considered to end with verse 13, and *for this cause*, in verse 14, to be a repetition of these introductory words *for this cause I bow my knees to God*. St. Jerome thinks there is a parenthesis, but that it ends in verse 3. *For this cause* the mystery has been made known to me, which, however, still does not save the grammatical construction. Œcumenius makes the parenthesis end at verse 8, with a change of construction. *To me the least of the Saints, the grace is given*. On the other

hand the Syriac and Arabic versions, St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, St. Anselm, St. Thomas, and among more recent writers Gagne, Tyrinus, Erasmus, and Fromond, all agree in understanding the verb *I am* in the first verse. For this thing's sake, I Paul am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. This will certainly avoid the grammatical difficulty in the construction of the sentence. But there seems to be a hiatus: there is no reason why St. Paul should have omitted the verb; nor is it clear why he should have prefaced the announcement with the words *for this thing's sake*, which it seems easier to refer to his earnest entreaty to God in verse 14 *et seq.*, that the Ephesian Christians may appreciate and understand the immense value and sublimity of the privileges to which they had been admitted; or to his not less earnest entreaty, addressed to the Ephesians themselves, in ch. iv., that for the sake of the Church of God, in which they had been made fellow-citizens with the Saints, and for their own salvation and eternal happiness, they would walk worthy of their vocation, and not listen to the seducers who would persuade them to neglect, renounce, or bring it into discredit. In any case the general course of the Apostle's argument is sufficiently clear, whatever mode may be adopted of solving the difficulties of his grammatical arrangement.

1. *For this thing's sake*, because you are, and in order that you may remain, fellow-citizens of the Saints, and the household and temple of God, I Paul, *the prisoner of Jesus Christ*. The article is prefixed to *prisoner* in the Greek. *The prisoner* of whom you have so often heard, for the captivity of the Apostle was a great political event, well known throughout the Roman empire. *I Paul*, who have been chosen by Jesus Christ to carry his name before nations and kings, Act. ix. 15. It was the indignation and anger of the Jews at his assiduous and successful

accomplishment of this mission, which occasioned his imprisonment, as appears from the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles, xx—xxxvi., and accordingly he describes himself as *the prisoner*, literally the *bound*, of *Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles*. It will be observed that St. Paul is not at all ashamed of his imprisonment, or of its cause, but glories in both as a high honour and distinction. This imprisonment was either that of two years at Rome, described Act. xxviii. 30, which is most probable; or that which took place two years later, and ended in the martyrdom of the Apostle, June 29, A.D. 67.

2. If indeed you have heard the dispensation of the grace of God, which was given me towards you.

3. That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have briefly written above.

4. So that you are able, when you read, to understand my wisdom in the mystery of Christ.

2. You will recognize that I am a prisoner on your account, if, which is most probable, you have heard of the Apostolic mission which God has entrusted to me, towards the Gentiles. St. Paul had resided and taught three years at Ephesus, but the Saints never, unless absolutely compelled, speak of God's graces shown to themselves, and it was possible that some of the Ephesians, who had been converted since the visit of the Apostle to their city, might not be sufficiently aware of his claims on their attention. He calls his apostolate *the dispensation*, or *economy, of the grace of God*. Economy means the prudent management of domestic affairs, or sometimes of the administration of the government of a state. Here it is God's prudent provision for the extension of the Gospel and the welfare of the Church. Every apostolate, prelacy, or charge of preaching is a *grace* of God, given gratu-

itously for the welfare and advantage of others. It should therefore not be sought for personal reasons, or from the favour of man, or for repose or pleasure; but only for labour.

3. You have heard that *the mystery* was made known to me by divine revelation. The Vulgate here uses the word *sacramentum*, and in the next verse *mysterium*, for the Greek term, which is the word last named. What *the mystery* is, he explains in the following verses. Here he states that God had directly revealed it to him, as is briefly recorded in the former chapters of this Epistle, especially in i. 9.

4. When you read what I have already said, and what I am about to say, you will at once perceive the source from which my information is drawn. The Greek has *my intelligence*, Theophylact, *my knowledge*. St. Paul does not always accurately distinguish between prudence, wisdom, intelligence, and science.

5. Which in other generations was not known to the sons of men, as now it is revealed to his holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit.

6. That the nations are coheirs, and united in one body, and fellow-participators of his promise, in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel.

5. The secret was absolutely unknown, in former generations, to the greater part of the nations of the earth. Neither was it known to any one of those nations, or even to their Prophets, with the same clearness and certainty with which it has now been revealed by the Holy Spirit to the holy Apostles and Prophets of the new law. The vocation of the Gentiles is, indeed, mentioned not obscurely by Isaias and other Prophets, but still there was silence as to many circumstances not then fully revealed, as, for instance, that the Gentiles were to be admitted

without becoming Jewish proselytes, without circumcision and obedience to the precepts of Moses. And to many nations the writings of these Prophets were wholly unknown. The truth was only revealed in its fulness to the *Apostles* and *Prophets* of the Christian Church. Of these Prophets there were many in the Apostolic age, as is evident from the writings of St. Paul, and particularly his first Epistle to the Corinthians.

6. The Gentiles, without becoming Jewish proselytes, are *heirs* with the Jews of God's heavenly kingdom, members of the holy Catholic Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, and *partakers* of the *promised* benediction of all nations, which was announced of old to the patriarch Abraham. Or else, of the Holy Spirit, which God had promised to pour forth upon mankind. And this inheritance, with all its glorious privileges in the present, and anticipations in the future, they obtain by faith in the *Gospel* of Christ. Those who listen to the teaching of the Apostles, have, therefore, a deeper insight into the mysteries of God, than was communicated even to the Prophets of the Old Testament.

7. Of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, which was given me according to the operation of his power.

8. To me of all the saints the least this grace was given, to preach among the Gentiles the untraceable riches of Christ.

9. And to enlighten all men what is the dispensation of the mystery hidden from the ages in God, who created all things.

7. I was made a minister and herald of this Gospel, not for any merits of my own, for I was a persecutor of the Church of God, but by the grace of God freely given to me. But this grace was efficacious for the conversion of

the nations, through the energy, the Greek word he employs, of the strength of God, evidenced by the miracles I was able to accomplish.

8. In a genuine spirit of humility St. Paul is not satisfied to call himself the last and least of Christians, but coins a comparative of this superlative, ἐλαχιστοτέρῳ less than the least, behind the last. Yet his trust in God's power was equal to his sense of his own personal unworthiness. St. Chrysostom says that St. Paul brought three things to his preaching; a dauntless courage, an unequalled wisdom, a blameless life. We are not worthy even to remember him. In fol. 909 of this Father will be found some comparisons illustrating the difficulty of imitating him. The grace, or favour, which St. Paul declares to have been conferred upon himself, was the privilege of making known to the nations the unsearchable, inexhaustible, literally the untraceable, *riches of Christ*. The *riches of Christ* is his generosity, the infinite richness, splendour, and felicity of the gifts which he has in store for those who believe in him, in the life to come, never to be exhausted or understood, and which he gives in part and in anticipation during this mortal life.

9. To teach all men *what is the economy of this mystery*. The *Economy*, in the language of theologians, means the Incarnation of Christ and the work of our redemption. To let all men see how God retained through the ages this great purpose, known only to himself, and how wisely and wonderfully, in the fulness of the times, he has accomplished it, by the Incarnation and death of Christ.

This Economy was a mystery known only to God, and hidden during the ages from all other knowledge than his. *Who created all things*. The Greek text has: *who created all things by Jesus Christ*, and this is the reading of Saint Chrysostom and of Theodoret. The last-named writer has, who made all things, his Son co-operating with him.

The same statement is made also by St. John, i. 3. *Through him (the Word) were all things made, and apart from him was nothing made*; and has been incorporated, almost in the expressions of Saint John, in the Creed of Nicæa: *By whom, Jesus Christ, our one Lord, per quem omnia facta sunt*, through him, or by his instrumentality, were all things made. St. Paul's introduction of this truth into his argument in this place, is in all probability directed against the heresy of the followers of Simon Magus, who maintained that the corporeal world was not made by Christ, nor by God the Father, but by inferior agents, or Angels of great power, but infinitely removed from the Supreme Deity. The same or similar heresies were still extant when St. John wrote his Gospel, at Ephesus, many years later, for which reason that Evangelist also repeats this wonderful truth. For it is in reality the foundation of the Christian faith, that the Creator of the world is Mary's Son, that is, its immediate Creator, acting in concert with his Father. But as God created all things by Jesus Christ, so also by Jesus Christ he re-created, restored, and regenerated all things in the great Economy, the Incarnation and death of God the Son.

The office of Apostles, Evangelists, and preachers is *to enlighten all men*. They are on earth what the higher ranks of angels are among the lower in heaven. Their function is to purify, enlighten, and make perfect. This is why the Angel in Apoc. xix. 20, would not receive worship from an Apostle. *See that you do it not, for I am your fellow-servant.*

10. That the multiform wisdom of God may become known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly regions, through the Church,

11. According to the purpose of the ages, which he made in Christ Jesus our Lord ;

12. In whom we have trust and access in confidence through his faith.

13. Therefore I entreat that you fail not in my tribulations for you ; which is your glory.

10. The statement of the Apostle in this verse is that God had called him to make known the Gospel of Christ to the Gentile nations of the world, in order, doubtless among other reasons, that the multiform wisdom of God may *now* (this word is in the Greek text) become known, as it never was known before, to the highest spirits of creation, who bear rule, authority, and power, in God's great empire in the heavens. This revelation is made to them through the fortunes, the history, the extension, and the wonderful permanence and preservation, of the holy Catholic Church, in all which Paul, as one of the founders of that Church, had a special share. And they will now understand, what they could not so clearly perceive before, how throughout all the history of the world in former ages God has been preparing the way for, and disposing the history and migrations of the nations, and the vicissitudes of empires, to the accomplishment of the great purpose he had all along in view, which was, one day to bring the nations to reconciliation with himself and the hope of eternal salvation, in his Son Jesus Christ, the Lord of Creation and second founder and chief of the human race. Thus, says Theophylact, God's mercy to man teaches his wisdom to the Angels. Paul is the Evangelist of angels, and enlightens them, says St. Chrysostom. The mysteries of God are made known to the highest orders of creation, through the Church ; a consideration which adds inconceivably to the dignity and honour of the human species. The Angel in the Apocalypse, xix. 10, as before observed, would not accept the worship of the Apostle, because the

function and office of the Apostle were higher than his own. The statement in the text is doubtless directed against the followers of Simon Magus, who held that the angels, especially the higher orders of the celestial hierarchy, are our mediators with God, and ought to be adored as gods.

11. *The purpose of the ages which he made in Christ Jesus.* There is some ambiguity in this verse, there being nothing either in the Greek or Latin phrase to show whether the antecedent to the relative pronoun *which* is the *wisdom*, or the *Church*, or the *purpose*. St. Jerome thinks it is the multiform *wisdom* of God, which he formed or planned in Christ. Others understand that this is made known through *the Church*, which God founded in Christ. More commonly it is understood of *the purpose of the ages*, which God from eternity, before the world was, intended to accomplish in Christ.

12. The result of this eternal purpose of God, carried into effect by the mediation and propitiation of Jesus Christ, and the end and object it was intended to effect, is that we are enabled to draw near to God in full trust and confidence, as children to a Father. *We have access with confidence through faith in Christ.* And this was God's purpose from eternity, that for which he created man, and redeemed him.

13. But this being so, and having God for your Father, I entreat you not to be downcast and afflicted on account of my sufferings and imprisonment in Judea, my being brought a captive to Rome, my detention here, my possible execution and death: as if this could cast any doubt on the ultimate success of my mission, or the genuineness and truth of what I proclaimed in my preaching among you. God's great purpose, from eternity, is not set aside by opposition or persecution from the powers

and princes of this passing world. Rather it is your glory, that I, your Apostle, should be counted worthy to suffer like Christ, and with Christ, and the palm of martyrdom, when I receive it, will be the token of your triumph and victory, as well as mine. God so loved us, says St. Chrysostom, that he gave his Son to die, and his servants to suffer, for us. St. Jerome and the Syrian version read it, *I pray that I may not fail*, or lose courage, but all other interpreters understand it as the Vulgate.

14. For this thing's sake I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15. Of whom every paternity in heaven and in earth is named,

16. That he will give you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit, into the interior man.

17. Christ to dwell by faith in your hearts, rooted and founded in charity.

18. That you may be able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the width and length and height and depth ;

19. To know also the charity of Christ, which exceeds knowledge, that you may be filled to all the plenitude of God.

14. On account of all that depends upon the maintenance of your faith and confidence in God under discouragement, and your disappointment and alarm at my imprisonment, I throw myself on my knees in prayer before God, entreating him to strengthen you with his spirit of power. St. Augustine remarks (*Serm. 7. de verbis Apostoli*) that St. Paul had entreated the Ephesians themselves not to allow their faith to fail, because this was of their free will, but at the same time he earnestly implores of God the aid of his Spirit to strengthen them, because free will is not sufficient, unless aided by the grace of God, to support the soul under trial.

The language of verses 14 and 15 is directed against the error of the heretics, who held that there were two original principles, one good and the other evil, and that it was by the evil principle, and his angels, that the material world was framed. Christ was not, therefore, in their view, the Son of the creator of the world. The Apostle teaches that there is but one God, who made all things, and is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in a different sense the Father also of angels and of the human soul, that is by adoption, for these do not spring from his substance, but are the work of his hands. He is the source of all Fatherhood in heaven and earth. And he asks for God's blessing and the grace of strength for the Ephesian Christians, *according to the riches of his glory*, the richness of his mercy, kindness, and charity, which is his highest glory, so far as we know, and which is lauded, praised and glorified in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam*, for his infinite love and mercy, which is God's *great glory*.

17. The Syriac version read these verses: that God would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened by his spirit, that in your interior man Christ may dwell through faith, and in your hearts through charity, your root and foundation remaining unmoved and firm, so that you may be able to comprehend, &c. The *interior man* is the mind, will, or resolution, and this, according to the Greek text and the Vulgate, requires to be strengthened by the Spirit of God. Faith is said to dwell *in the heart*, which in ancient times was figuratively regarded as the seat of the intellectual powers, and faith is an intellectual virtue, to which reason and understanding contribute. *Rooted and founded in charity*. Charity is a tree which throws its branches towards the skies, in search of the smile of God, and sends its roots downwards, to soothe and alleviate the sorrows of earth. And

Charity is a building of which the foundations are fixed firmly in the love of God, and faith in his love and care for us, while the upper chambers afford a refuge for the homeless and the friendless. Only the grace of charity enables the soul to understand and measure, to apprehend and realize the infinite charity of God, to which it is in its measure the response.

18. That you may be able to comprehend and understand, with all other Christians, for whom also I implore the same inestimable happiness, the measurement of the divine goodness and charity shown in the mystery of man's redemption, and the vocation of the nations to the faith and grace of Jesus Christ. Wide as the furthest limits of the inhabited world, long as the ages of eternity through which God's love for his people will endure, deep as the abyss of misery and ruin from which he has raised us, high as the throne of Christ in the heavens, where he has placed us. The Apostle's words are indeterminate, since he does not expressly say the breadth and length, the height and depth, of *what*, and there have been accordingly many interpretations of this passage, which are enumerated by Cornelius à Lapide. The above seems to be that which is most in agreement with the argument of St. Paul in this place. St. Augustine refers to the four members of the cross on which Christ was fixed, the lower end of which was buried in the ground, but it may be doubted whether this is to be regarded as a poetical or rhetorical allusion, or whether he considered this resemblance to be actually in the Apostle's mind.

19. *That you may know the charity of Christ*, which exceeds all human knowledge, and cannot be fully measured and comprehended by any finite intelligence, not even in the ages of eternity. St. Paul uses the word *know* in the sense of learn or advance in the knowledge of. This infinite charity Christ exhibited in offering himself for us

to God the Father, a sacrifice on the cross, and will exhibit farther by the manifestation of his love to the Saints in heaven.

20. *That you may be filled to the fulness of God.* The fulness of God is the complete perfection of Deity, reflected and represented to creation in Jesus Christ. The fulness of all perfection, the infinite holiness of God. *It pleased the Father that in Christ all the fulness should dwell*, Col. i. 19. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity*, ii. 9. *God gives the Spirit to Christ without measure*, Joh. iii. 34. But this fulness Christ imparts to his faithful people, as he makes them partakers of all his privileges and all his glory. *Of his fulness all we have received*, Joh. i. 16. That the Saints receive God's grace in different degree, according to their measure and capacity, is certain; but vessels of different capacity may all be full. That you may be filled with the knowledge and love of God, and the fulness of all divine gifts. We have in this passage a complete description of the reward of the spiritual life. Strengthened with the might of the Spirit, Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, charity immovable and unfailing, a complete understanding of the full extent of the love of Christ, which exceeds all human knowledge. The Greek word *πλήρωμα* used in these passages by St. Paul and St. John is borrowed from the vocabulary of the heretics, who designated by it the abode of the angels or celestial spirits who presided over the destinies of man and the order of the universe. This is why St. Paul says that the whole *πλήρωμα* dwells in Christ.

20. And to him who is able to do all things more abundantly than we ask or understand, according to the power which operates in us;

21. To him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, to all generations of the age of ages. Amen.

The consideration of the infinite love of God prompts the Apostle to this ascription of glory and thanksgiving. God is able to do for us infinitely more than we can either ask or understand, and this, in some degree, we know by our own experience, by his grace which operates or is effectual in us. And as he is able, he is also ready, and what he does is not limited by what we ask. We may, therefore, in full confidence, leave our future to him. To him, therefore, be *the glory* in the Church which has been redeemed and saved by Jesus Christ; not to us, the Apostles, who are his ministers and messengers. The Greek text omits the word *and* before *in Christ Jesus*. The Syriac has: To him be glory in his Church through Jesus Christ for all the ages of the world of worlds. The Greek and the Vulgate have *to all generations*, which indicates that the benediction extends to the end of this world, through all generations of the Church on earth.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

To know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, is the great study of our mortal life, and will continue to be our occupation for eternity. We are not to find fault with the Apostle for telling us to know that which can never be known. No science can be fathomed to its depth, no past events recalled in their completeness, no philosophy comprehend and explain the mysteries of existence; and yet science, and history, and philosophy exercise, and will continue to exercise, the powers of the human intelligence, and may certainly be *known*. So may the love of Christ, which passes knowledge. It was known to his most Blessed Mother, and to Saint Joseph, who guarded his childhood; to Saint Peter, who could not speak of it without tears; to Saint John, who reclined upon the bosom of Christ; to Saint Paul, who assigns this study as the task of our existence, here and

hereafter; to Saint Francis, who devoted himself to poverty in acknowledgment of it; to Saint Francis Xavier, who nearly lost his sight with weeping at the thought of it; to Saint Ignatius, who groaned all through his agony in physical pain from the torrent of joy with which it overwhelmed him; to Saint Philip, whose heart it broke while he was still alive; to many other Saints who lived in this one thought, and some of whom died under its weight. Christ's love for his creatures is known to the Holy Angels, though never so fully as when they witnessed the extent of his love for man. To the Princes of Heaven, Christ's love was made known by the happiness he has prepared for the Saints in eternity, and this is the great distinction of our race, that to the highest orders of Creation the depth and intensity of the love of Christ is revealed in what he has done, and purposes to do, for us. It can never be revealed fully, to Seraph or Archangel, Apostle or Religious, not even to the holy Mother of God, because the Finite cannot apprehend the Infinite. Yet as the aged Simeon took the Almighty Creator of the world into his arms, and blessed God, so may we, if we will, and by God's grace, get to know that which passes all created knowledge, or possibility of knowing, the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

1. I therefore entreat you, I, the bound in the Lord, that you walk worthily of the vocation by which you are called,

2. With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in charity,

3. Solicitous to keep the unity of the spirit in the chain of peace.

CHAPTER IV. In this chapter the Apostle earnestly exhorts the Christians of Ephesus to lead a holy life, in accordance with the sanctity of the faith to which they had been called.

1. *Therefore*, in consideration of the blessing of God, who has called you from eternity, out of heathenism and infidelity, to faith, and grace, and glory, equally with his own people the Jews, I Paul, prisoner for Christ's sake and yours, entreat you to walk worthily of the mystical body of Christ to which you belong, and the inheritance of God to which you look forward. A prisoner on your account, says Theodoret; for if I did not preach, I should be free. It is obvious that this request of the Apostle is equally applicable to all Christians and Catholics, in all countries and all ages; each individual among whom was born a Gentile and a child of wrath, and is called into the fellowship of the Saints and the household of God, and made a child of God, and a Christian, which signifies another Christ.

2. *With all humility*, the Greek and the Syriac have, *humility of mind*, not affected, but arising from a genuine sense of your own personal unworthiness. *Gentleness*, or

moderation of speech and action, is the daughter of humility, and is opposed to irritability, as humility is to arrogance. The prominence which the Apostle gives to these graces indicates apparently that he thought the Ephesian Christians likely to be deficient in them. They would scarcely learn them from the teachers of heresy ; and they are virtues which were unknown to, or not much prized and cultivated by, the pagan world. With *patience* and *charity* bearing one another's imperfections, which is charity's most difficult task, while yet it is one which genuine humility would dictate, for we all have imperfections of our own.

3. *Solicitous to keep unity.* Indifference to peace, the unity of souls, the integrity of the Church, is a crime ; but it is a much greater crime to be the cause of disunion. The Christian should ever be solicitous to keep unity of belief, sentiment, and affection. Peace is a *chain* which binds souls together by a bond not inconsistent with freedom, for it is voluntary. This is obviously true, if applied to any voluntary association of a small number of persons ; it is not less true in the holy Catholic Church, the members of which adhere to Christ by faith and love, but are under no compulsion.

4. One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your vocation.

5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

6. One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all.

4. *One body and one spirit.* There is no verb, either in the Greek text or the Vulgate. These sentences are so many inducements to unity of sentiment and action ; but it seems probable also that there is a side reference to the errors of the heretics of the time. They despised the Catholic Church, and held to an inner and invisible fellow-

ship peculiar to themselves, for which reason the Apostle says there is *one* body, the mystical body of Jesus Christ. And *one* Spirit, not a multitude of celestial intelligences with different influences exerted over the souls of men. All baptised Christians are called to the same glorious destiny, to share the immortality of Christ in heaven. *You are all called in one hope of your vocation.* You have all *one Lord*, and your allegiance is not divided among a number of Angels and Archangels as your patrons and mediators. You have all *one faith*, not a creed taught publicly to the ignorant, and a different one reserved for those initiated into the mysteries of oriental philosophy. *One baptism*; it is extremely probable the heretics had another, or some similar ceremony of initiation for those whom they admitted to intimate association. *One God*, for the heretics recognised two, an evil Deity who made the world, and an unseen and unknown abstraction from whom proceeded the celestial intelligences whom they proclaimed as the real objects of devotion. It is further necessary to observe, in order to explain what follows, that they regarded the evil Creator of the world as the author of the Old Testament, and God of the Jews, and consequently the enemy of Christ, and while adopting some of the external rites of Judaism, taught secretly that the wisdom of man consisted in disobedience to all the moral commands of the Creator of the world. This is why the Apostle finds it necessary to insist so strongly, as he does in this and the following two chapters of this Epistle, upon the sanctity of the Christian life. And in this verse for the same reason he adds that the Creator of the world is *the Father of Christ and all Christ's people*; that he is *above all* angels and intelligences whatever; that his power and presence extend *through all things*, visible and invisible, and that his Spirit dwells in *us all*, not only in a few who are endowed by the law of their creation with a superior

nature which makes them different from their fellow men. It would seem as if this passage must have suggested the phraseology of the Creed of Nicea, *I believe in one God, in one Lord Jesus Christ, I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.*

The Vulgate reads, as the concluding words of this verse, *et in omnibus nobis*, and in us all. The Greek text, as we have it now, reads : *and in you all.*

7. But to each one of us grace is given, according to the measure of the donation of Christ.

8. On account of what he says : Ascending on high, he led captive captivity, he gave gifts to men.

7. Although there is but *one Spirit* who dwells in all Christians, his gifts are various, both in degree and in kind. This inequality in the gifts of the Spirit might possibly occasion pride, discontent, or envy ; and as has been said, the heretics attributed these gifts to the influences of different celestial spirits. St. Paul meets this by showing : 1, as in this verse, that God's gifts are assigned to each by the donation or gift of Christ, in his wisdom and power, not necessarily in proportion to merit ; 2, that they are not the property of the receiver, but belong to the whole Church, in verse 12 ; 3, that this variety tending to unity should be a cause of harmony and not of discord, verse 13.

8. The quotation is from Ps. lxvii. 19. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts in men. The Psalm was composed by David and chanted on the occasion of bringing the Ark of God in procession into the citadel of Jerusalem, which he had taken from the Jebusites, as described in 2 Reg. vi. and 1 Paral. xv. 21, where this song of victory is expressly mentioned. God's presence dwelt mystically in the Ark, and the Psalmist says that God had ascended

the mountain, leading his Jebusite captives as prisoners, and received them as gifts devoted to his service. St. Paul applies this to Christ, who ascended to heaven, attended by the souls of the saints rescued from the *limbus patrum*, and reaching his throne received from his Father the celestial gifts which he has distributed to men on earth. What these gifts are, or at least the first, most necessary, and principal ones among them, is explained in verse 11, but the Apostle has another subject to dispose of first.

9. But that he ascended, what is it, unless that he descended first into the lower parts of the earth ?

10. Who descended, is he who also ascended above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

These three verses, 8—10, seem to be directed against another error of the followers of Simon, who denied the reality of the death of Christ, his resurrection, and ascension into heaven. They maintained that all this took place, like the Incarnation, in appearance only. For the material world being the work of an evil God, was, in their view, essentially impure, and a celestial Power, such as they acknowledged Christ to be, could not possibly come into such close contact with it, as is implied by actually taking human flesh and suffering death. The Apostle, therefore, insists that Christ really died on the cross, rose again the third day from the dead, and ascended into heaven. There was no reason for his ascending into heaven, if he had not come down from heaven ; though both were not in the same manner. He descended by assuming our nature ; he ascended, having assumed it. He descended bodiless ; he ascended clothed with a body. The expression *inferiores partes terræ* means simply *this lower world*. He ascended *to fill all things* with his glory. *Heaven and earth are full of thy glory*. The

humiliation of Christ was a new revelation to the powers of heaven of the glory of God : and earth adores him as her God and Saviour with a deeper and stronger love and devotion, now that he is man. Also he ascended to fulfil the prophecies of old, such as that quoted by the Apostle in verse 8.

11. And he himself gave some indeed apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers,

12. To the consummation of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ.

13. Until we all meet into the unity of the faith and recognition of the Son of God, to perfect man, to the measure of the age of the plenitude of Christ.

The Apostle here reverts to the gifts which Christ, ascending to his throne at the right hand of God, received from his Father and transmitted and communicated to the human race, whose nature he had assumed. These gifts did not consist in any provision for this mortal life, for he had already given the earth to man to cultivate, inhabit, and improve ; they were gifts far higher and more spiritual, worthy of the Giver, providing for the perfection and consummation of those who receive them. If all mankind have not benefited by them, this is not the fault of God, who requires only faith as the condition of their enjoyment. They consist in the graces required to bring human nature to its absolute and ideal perfection, the standard of which is *the plenitude of Christ*, the sharing his divine perfection. But this requiring, from the nature of the case, the co-operation of the human will (for an influence which crushed freedom and left the will no room to operate, would not have been worthy of God, nor done justice to the nature of man) the *Divine Wisdom* saw fit to communicate these gifts by the aid of human agency.

Christ therefore *gave*, as his present to *mankind*, the twelve Apostles, to proclaim the Gospel of his redemption. With the Twelve, were associated Paul, Barnabas, and Silas. The *prophets* of the New Testament explained the mysteries of the faith, and sometimes predicted the future, like Agabus in Act. xxi. 10. Their place is now taken by the interpreters and expositors of the Holy Scriptures. The *Evangelists* are the authors of the four Gospels; also the seventy disciples whom Christ sent before his face; the term is also applied to those who aided and assisted the Apostles in the preaching of the Gospel, as Titus, Timothy, Apollo, Silas. In Acts xxi. 8, Philip the deacon, who baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia, Acts viii. is styled Philip the Evangelist. *Pastors* are bishops and priests entrusted with the care of souls; and *doctors* those who teach the people of Christ. St. Paul does not say, *and some doctors*, because the offices of pastor and doctor, though they are distinguishable in their function, are always united in the same person, all pastors being teachers, and all teachers pastors. The Apostolic office is continued in the Church in the person of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who also exercises the prophetic office, in that he is the referee in all questions of faith and morals, and is the centre of evangelistic work, but what he more especially exercises is the office of *Pastor*. Only to Peter Christ said *Feed my sheep*. Bishops and priests execute this office locally, in dioceses or parishes, but their pastoral mission is necessarily derived from this commission to Peter, as Pastor of the whole Church. The word *pastor* or shepherd, used figuratively in the Old Testament, always means a *King*. See 3 Reg. xxii. 17, Is. xlv. 28. St. Paul appears to have expected the return of Christ in the lifetime of most of the members of the Apostolic College, so that it was less necessary for him to dwell on this point. Although the offices enumerated by

the Apostle are distinct, there is no reason why one or more of them may not be combined in the same person.

12. We have now the object to which all this is directed, the *consummation* or perfection of the Saints. The Syriac has the completion of their number. The Apostle names first the end to be attained, the perfection of the Saints, and then the means by which it is accomplished; *the work of the ministry, and the edification*, or building up, *the body of Christ*, the holy Catholic Church. This is not attained simply by the existence of a hierarchy and priesthood, but by their actively engaging in *the work of their ministry*, or several offices, and their gifts are bestowed upon them, not for their own use, but for the edification of the Church.

13. Then St. Paul describes the mode of action and the nature of the result obtained by the edification of the Church. *The work of the ministry* is to continue until *we*, the believers in Christ in all parts and countries of the world, meet in one point, like travellers who set out from various places but all converge in the same place, the unity of the faith, and recognition, or knowledge, of the *Son of God*. The Syriac has: Until we all become one whole, in faith and knowledge of the Son of God, and one perfect man, into the measure of the stature of his fullness. The work of the ministry must therefore continue to the end of the world, until *we are all come*, when the various offices in the Church of Christ will cease, as no longer necessary. *To perfect man*. A figure drawn from the growth of the human body, through infancy, childhood and youth, to its full height and strength. So the Christian grows in faith, and the knowledge and love of God, and becomes by degrees complete and perfect in Christ. The work of the Church is not only to make converts to the faith of Christ, but when made, to bring them to his perfect likeness. The measure of the *age* or

stature (the Greek word will signify either, the Syriac has *stature*, of the fullness of Christ, is the perfection of faith and love, by which Christ is formed in the Christain, and the Christian, as it were, transformed into Christ.

The Apostle's figure is clearly to be understood of the spiritual perfection which the Saints are to attain, or may attain, in this mortal life. Nevertheless some Latin writers, and especially scholastic writers, have taken the words literally and not figuratively, and understand St. Paul to refer to the resurrection of the body, in the perfect *age* and *stature* which Christ had at the time of his death and resurrection. And they maintain that the Apostle means to say that all who die, even when infants, will be raised to the size and stature they would have had at the age of thirty-four or thirty-five years. St. Augustine refers to this interpretation as extant in his time, *De Civit. Dei*, xxii. 15, but rejects it, preferring the former or figurative interpretation. Some writers have even erroneously inferred that women, with the exception of the Mother of God, will rise masculine, and Tyrinus names St. Basil, St. Hilary, St. Athanasius, and Cornelius à Lapide cites Scotus among the schoolmen, as maintaining this opinion. But whatever may be the opinion of these writers, the Church has never accepted it, any more than the reason given by Scotus in favor of it, viz. that the feminine sex is a fault or imperfection of nature. For woman is as perfect as man, though that perfection is on a smaller scale. And her sex can hardly be a fault of nature, since woman was formed by the hands of the Creator from the side of man. And there can be no reason why, if the Mother of God retains her sex, other women may not retain it also. The *plenitude of Christ* is the perfection of his charity, humility,

constancy, and other divine graces, in all of which there is no reason why women and men may not equally attain perfection.

14. That we may not now be little children tossed by the waves, and be carried away by every wind of doctrine, by the crafty deceit of men, by villainy, to the cheating of error.

14. That *now* we are spiritually grown up, and have attained the measure of the stature or age of Christ, as just described, the Greek has, *that we may be no longer children*. St. Chrysostom and Theophylact also read it so. Little children, on account of the imperfection of their judgment, and inexperience of life, are easily persuaded, and liable to be tossed on the waves of conflicting doctrines and opinions. Driven round by every veering wind of false teaching. *The crafty deceit of men* is in the Greek *κνβείλα*, which signifies literally dice-playing, and metaphorically craft or cheating. To this the Apostle adds knavery and artifices of deceit. The whole picture is undoubtedly a portrait of the heretical teachers at Ephesus, who employed these artifices to make converts to their cause. It does not necessarily follow that the heretics were changeable or uncertain in the doctrines they taught, though doubtless they developed them with great caution. The charge of levity and inconstancy held against those who listened to them, and allowed themselves to be influenced by these novelties and groundless speculations. The phrase used in the Greek, *no longer*, indicates that some considerable number of the Ephesians were confused and agitated by these controversies and novel theories. It was one of the intentions and objects of the gifts which Christ received for man, the graces

communicated through the Church, to preserve mankind from the deceit and error prepared by the fraud and malice of the devil, and of evil men.

15. But doing truth in love, may grow in him through all things, who is the head, Christ,

16. From whom the whole body compacted and connected through every joint of supply, according to the operation by measure of every member, makes increase of the body, to the edification of itself in charity.

15. *Doing truth in love.* Believing what is true, and putting it into practice by charity. The Greek word is ἐληθεύοντες, which means ordinarily speaking truth, but the Vulgate has rendered it by what is obviously the meaning of the Apostle, *Veritatem facientes*. The expression may be inaccurate in etymology, but is profoundly true in philosophy. If you really believe, you will act on your belief; if you do not act on it, the inference is that you do not really believe. This is the judgment of the world, which not altogether inconsistently or unreasonably, connects belief with practice, and charges with hypocrisy those whose acts are plainly at variance with the faith they profess. Perhaps *doing truth* is opposed to the fraud and artifice referred to in verse 14. The frequent suggestion of *charity* implies that the Apostle thought the Ephesians deficient in this grace, though we have no information as to the circumstances on which this opinion was grounded. *May grow in him*, in all things and in all directions, in breadth and length, depth and height, in all gifts and graces proceeding from Christ, who is the head of the body, and the source of its life and growth.

16. *From whom the whole body.* There is some obscurity in this verse, arising from the brevity of expression, as if, says St. Chrysostom, the Apostle was trying to say every-

thing at once. He does not allow himself time to distinguish between the figure and the reality. The figure is the human body. The Church of Christ is bound together by every variety of grace supplied by the sacraments, and the various ministries of God's appointment, which are the *junctures of subministration*, and the graces thus supplied to, and contributed by, every member separately, re-act upon the whole, to its extension in numbers and advancement in sanctity, so that the body becomes in this sense the cause, and second source, of its own edification or building up in charity.

17. This therefore I say, and testify in the Lord ; that now you walk not as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their sense.

18. Having the understanding obscured in darkness, alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, on account of the blindness of their hearts ;

19. Who being hopeless, have delivered themselves over to immodesty, to the operation of every uncleanness, to avarice.

17. *This therefore I say.* The Apostle reverts to what he said in verse 1, *I beseech you to walk worthily of your calling.* He interrupted his exhortation at that point in order to give an additional reason for it, namely that the whole of the wonderful economy of God's grace was directed to reproduce in the soul of the Christian the likeness of Christ, in all its perfection. This being the object aimed at, *I testify in the Lord that now*, the Greek omits *now, that henceforward you no longer walk as the other Gentiles walk*, in the vanity of their sense, in the Greek and Syriac *of their mind*. Following the dictates of their senses and their own judgment, they are wholly given up to vanities.

18. *Having the understanding obscured*, in the Greek, darkened in intellect, far removed from the sanctity of life which God looks for in his creatures, and not even thinking of it. The cause of this alienation is ignorance, and this arises from the blindness, or hardness of their hearts. That is, the hardness of their hearts occasions ignorance by which their understanding is obscured, and they are become incapable of perceiving that God required from them holiness of life. The Apostle here describes the condition of the Gentile world internally, as regards their souls; in the next verse he shows what was its outward manifestation. No doubt this blindness, and its terrible consequences, had come upon the nations gradually, and in the course of ages. God made a covenant with Noe, the second father of our race, after the deluge, by which salvation was attainable by such of the nations as continued in the worship of the true God, and in the observation of the well known laws of the Creator of the world. But they had come to neglect the worship of God, and transferred their adoration to false divinities, the patriarchs of nations, or the powers of nature, and their understanding becoming darkened, and their hearts hardened, they had lost all knowledge or memory of the holy laws of God. Yet even in this condition God had not abandoned them, and he offered them reconciliation with himself through the Gospel of Christ. *This period of ignorance God disregarded, but now calls upon all men to repent*, Act. xvii. 30.

19. *Who being hopeless*. The Greek text at present has ἀπηλγότες, which signifies, having ceased to grieve, no longer capable of remorse or sorrow for sin. They must once have felt such remorse, or their forefathers in former times; but having crushed and driven it out of their hearts, they feel it now no more. This reading is followed by Saint Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Theophylact.

The translator of the Vulgate appears to have read ἀπηλπότες, having lost hope, and renders it by *desperantes*, having sunk into despair. Having abandoned all hope of any happier life than this hereafter, they set themselves deliberately to obtain as much pleasure as could be had on this side the grave, surrendering or giving themselves up to all that is unclean and immodest. The word *avarice* does not in this place signify desire for money, as St. Anselm points out, but the insatiable appetite for pleasure, as impossible to satisfy as the miser's longing for gain.

It seems necessary to conclude, from the Apostle's addressing this exhortation to his converts, not to imitate the Gentiles, that the heretical teachers of Ephesus encouraged them to do so, consistently with their monstrous tenet that the Creator of the world was the enemy of Christ, and that in the service of Christ they were to rebel against and violate all his laws, and it is to this that the Apostle refers in the next verse.

20. But you have not thus learned Christ.

21. If, however, you heard him, and in him were taught, as truth exists in Jesus ;

22. That you put off, according to the former mode of life, the old man which is corrupt according the desires of illusion.

23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24. And put on the new man, which according to God was created in justice and sanctity of truth.

20. You have not learned in the school of Christ to give up your lives to licentiousness and the enjoyments of sense ; if at least you received his doctrine from those who conveyed the real tradition of his teaching and holy life. Such, says Theodoret, is the doctrine of impiety ; but the discipline of Christ is directly opposed to it. In

using the expression *if, however*, v. 21, the Apostle does not express any doubt that the Ephesians were originally instructed in the true doctrine of Christ; but some of them had since been led astray, and many more were in danger of being led astray, by the heretics who had interfered with their faith after St. Paul left Ephesus. So Grotius understands it. *You have heard Christ*, not, indeed, speaking in person, but by the report of those who remembered and repeated what he said.

22. What you were taught by the discipline of Christ was to lay aside the old life of Gentile licentiousness, when you laid aside the garments of daily use on entering the font of Baptism. The life of the unregenerate must be, in some form or other, a life of increasing corruption, in which the appetites of the physical nature, or the ambition of worldly success, or hatred of the truth of God, not being resisted, or not resisted effectually by God's grace, will at last completely subjugate the will. All these are *desideria erroris*, or desires springing from illusion, for these things have in reality no power to satisfy the soul, and leave it in desolation and despair. They promise sweetness, but the fruit at last is poisonous and bitter.

24. The baptized assumed a white robe to signify that he was transformed into *a new man*; that is the same man, but with new dispositions, aspirations, and aim in life. He becomes what our first father was when he came from his Creator's hands, in true justice and true sanctity. *The spirit of your mind* is a Hebrew idiom, implying the mind and heart, will and disposition, all of which are *renewed*, or brought back to what they were when man was *new*, or freshly created. The word *renovamini*, in verse 23, *be ye renewed*, is in the Vulgate in the imperative mood, but in the Greek it is in the infinitive, like *deponere* in verse 22; you were taught to lay aside the old life and enter on a new one.

St. Jerome considers that the new man *created in justice and sanctity of truth* is our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Apostle says the Christian converts were instructed to *put on*, that is to imitate in his perfect justice and sanctity. It is a new creation, as regards the Christian who receives the remission of sins and the grace of God in Baptism. He becomes another Christ, an image and likeness of Christ, and a follower of his sanctity, humility, modesty, gentleness, and charity. The old creation did not fulfil God's purpose, and resulted in the fall; the new creation is accompanied with higher graces and will lead to salvation and glory. But it also has a higher and more perfect ideal to imitate and follow, as Christ is more perfect and holy than our first father Adam.

25. On which account, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each with his neighbour, because we are members of one another.

26. Be angry and do not sin: let not the sun set upon your wrath.

27. Give no place to the devil.

28. Who used to steal, let him not steal now; and rather let him labour, working with his hands at what is good, whence he may afford what is requisite to one who suffers.

29. Every evil word, let it not come forth out of your mouth; but whatever is good to edification of faith, that it may give grace to the hearers.

30. And do not sadden the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed to the day of redemption.

31. All bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy, be taken away from you, with all malice.

32. And be kind to one another, merciful, forgiving one another, as also God in Christ forgave you.

25. The Apostle begins with the sins of the tongue. *Laying aside falsehood*, or lying. Speak truth to one another, because we are members of the same body. The eye does not mislead the feet, nor the hands put stumbling stones in their way. St. Chrysostom says you cannot wrong your brother without wronging Christ, for you sin against Christ when you sin against one of his members. Possibly St. Paul, having lived three years at Ephesus, was aware of the weakness of the Ephesians, particularly the pagans, in this respect.

26. This injunction is hypothetical. *If you are angry, do not sin.* Anger is not necessarily sin in itself. It is, as St. Chrysostom observes, a passion implanted in human nature to enable us to assail and overcome the difficulties we continually encounter. But it ought not to lead us into violence or injustice. And it should not settle into resentment. The setting of the sun, among the Hebrews, and other orientals, was the beginning of a new day, as in the beginning of the Book of Genesis, *The evening and the morning made one day*, and this tradition is preserved in the festivals of the Church, which begin with the first vespers. Your anger should end with the day. The first clause of this verse is a quotation from Ps. iv. 5.

27. *Give no place to the devil.* A settled enmity or chronic resentment in the heart will give evil spirits an opportunity of temptation. It is possible, however, to take the Greek expression τῷ διαβόλῳ in a general sense, and in its literal meaning the *slanderer* or *calumniator*. Do and say nothing under the influence of anger which may expose you to slander or calumny, for though the slander will be false, it may nevertheless be an occasion of scandal against the faith you profess. Especially in a place like Ephesus there would be many enemies of the faith on the watch for such opportunities, and against them it was essential to keep guard.

28. *Who used to steal. Qui furabatur.* The Greek has ὁ κλέπτων, in the present tense, *he who steals*. But this participle also represents the imperfect, and this the Vulgate translator has preferred. To *steal* stands for any unjust and illegitimate means of acquiring what properly belongs to others, whether open robbery, secret theft, or fraud. Whoever has been accustomed to live by such unlawful means, should in future exert himself in some honest and useful labour, which may give him the opportunity of making restitution, though indirectly, of the wrong he has done, by giving to others who are more destitute than himself. It is remarkable that the Apostle says nothing of the restitution of stolen property to those from whom it was taken. This is undoubtedly necessary where such restitution is practicable, but it very rarely is so, for money or goods are usually stolen for the relief of immediate and pressing necessity, or if otherwise, are generally spent and squandered. Zacchæus said, *if I have defrauded anyone*, I hereby offer to *restore him fourfold*, but he expressed it as doubtful, and was not conscious of having actually done so, at least intentionally.

29. *Every evil word*, expressions that are unclean and unholy, ribald and scurrilous, even should they rise to your lips, which was not altogether improbable with people who had been brought up from childhood amid pagan associations, let it at any rate not pass them. When you speak, say what will tend to *edification of faith*, to the increase of faith and piety in your hearers ; or at least, will give them *pleasure*.

Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.

30. Do not by evil language *sadden* or *offend* the Holy Spirit of God. A guest who is insulted will quit the house, especially a guest of regal rank, and the Holy Spirit, thus grieved or offended, may possibly withdraw his power and presence. For by that Spirit you were *sealed* or marked,

in Baptism and Confirmation, for the great day of the Resurrection, to be on that day finally and for ever set free from all evil, moral or material. To that prospect all your words and meditations and actions should be, in reason and in piety, directed and referred. St. Chrysostom observes that not the soul only, but the body also, is sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, for the day of the Resurrection. But that which is sealed must not be opened but by authorization of him in whose name the seal is affixed. The mouth cannot therefore be opened but by the authorization of the Holy Spirit; much less opened for the utterance of that which is filthy and obscene. He who says what is useless and purposeless, violates the seal of the Spirit; he who utters evil words grieves and offends Him.

31. We have an ascending series in this verse. First, *bitterness* in the heart, from which proceeds the rising storm of anger, *Ουμος*, whose threatening voice is heard as from afar. This, when yielded to, breaks forth in *ὀργη*, indignation, the full tempest of the soul, which finds expression in *clamour*, or violent and wrathful language against our neighbour. And finally swells into *blasphemy*, or evil speaking, against charity or faith, sometimes against the author of charity and faith. *Clamour* is the steed of anger, says St. Chrysostom. Throw the horse, and you overturn the rider. You clip the wings of anger, if you silence clamour. Let all these things, says the Apostle, be removed and taken away from the midst of you; as if he had reason to fear they were too really there. And with them all malignity or cherished purposes of hatred and revenge, which are in direct opposition to the charity of Christ.

32. God has for Christ's sake forgiven you much more than you can ever be called upon to forgive your neighbour; and you stand in need of greater *kindness* and

mercy at his hands than you can ever exhibit to others. The words *donantes* and *donavit*, which the vulgate employs, stand for *condonantes* and *condonavit*, which correspond to the meaning of the Greek text.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Christ is the Head of the Church, and his Spirit flows forth into the whole Church, which is his body, and into all the faithful, who are his members. Christ, therefore, is my head. To him, as my head, I must continually be united by habitual charity, and as frequently as possible by acts of faith, hope, and charity, that by union with him I may receive from him light, spiritual guidance, spiritual grace. As in the natural order the body cannot act without the head, so neither in the supernatural, can you do anything without your mystical head. Whatever, therefore, you propose to do, consult your Head. Unite yourself to Christ, that in his light and by his spirit you may act and be acted on. When about to pray to God, unite yourself with Christ, and in him, through him, and with him, pray to, adore, and love, your God and his.

Christ is the Heart of the Church, and his influence communicates spiritual life to all its members. Christ, therefore, is my heart, and to me the source and principle of life. By his Spirit I am animated, moved, directed. I must, therefore, as frequently as possible, unite myself to Christ, my heart, and if it be possible, continually live in the heart of Christ, do everything in and through the heart of Christ; use his heart as mine; in and through this sacred Heart, love, adore, and pray to God. This will be the best possible consolation in spiritual dryness and desolation. Forget your own cold heart, unite yourself to the divine Heart of Christ, which is also yours, and use it as your own. Through this divine heart pray, love, adore. Offer to God the infinite affection of the heart of Christ,

its ceaseless and eternal adoration, thanksgiving, praise, and benediction. Rejoice to think of the acts of piety which proceed from the heart of Christ. Rejoice that by that Heart God is worthily loved, adored, praised, and honoured. In thinking of the divine acts of this Sacred Heart, your own will find rest and peace.

CHAPTER V.

1. Be therefore imitators of God, as sons most beloved ;
 2. And walk in love, as also Christ loved us, and delivered himself up for us an oblation and victim to God, for an odour of sweetness.
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Ch. V. In this chapter the Apostle urges in detail the exercise of Christian charity and purity, and of mutual kindness and affection in Christian marriage.

1. *Be imitators of God.* The Syriac, Be therefore like God. This follows from the concluding words of the last verse, *God has for Christ's sake forgiven you. As his most dear sons*, for the sons, as a rule, are dearest to the father, who most resemble him. God forgives, and loves to do good ; be you also forgiving, and do good when you have the power.

2. *And walk in love*, not only by occasional acts of charity, but the habitual and progressive exercise of it. St. Chrysostom observes that it is not said simply, be imitators of God, but is immediately added, *in charity*. God is in all things to be admired, but not in all things to be imitated. He is to be admired in his knowledge, power, immensity, eternity, and other infinite perfections, but in these he cannot be imitated, for they are beyond our reach. But he would have us all imitate his goodness, forgive as he forgives, bless as he blesses, and this, in our measure, we may all do. If you forgive, you are like God, if you benefit your neighbour, you become like God to him. For man to man becomes as God by well doing.

As also Christ loved us, and offered himself a sacrifice for us, so should we be ready to sacrifice our lives for one another. The Apostle does not say this, but this is evidently the sense of what he omits. *For an odor of sweetness.* The allusion is no doubt to the sacrifice of Noe, Gen. viii. 21. *The Lord smelled a sweet odor, and said to him, I will no more curse the earth for man.* Christ, the true Noe, saved us from the deluge of sin, and God, refreshed by the most sweet odor of his sacrifice, resolved to spare mankind for his sake. The sacrifice of Christ was most grateful to God, and on account of it he accepts whatever other sacrifices man offers to him; for in this great sacrifice Christ is himself the Priest, *he offered himself*, and was himself the victim, and it was not for his friends, but for sinners, his enemies. By this sacrifice the evil odor of the sins of men is driven away, and God is pleased with the smoke of incense of this perfect oblation. And this Priest and Victim was himself God, as well as man. He offered himself willingly, not on compulsion. He offered himself from charity. He offered himself wholly, God and Man. Therefore this sacrifice is in all things and altogether well pleasing to God. And for the sake of this sacrifice we should be ready to deliver up ourselves to death, if it be necessary, for the safety and especially the salvation of others, and sacrifice our own inclinations for charity.

3. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or avarice, let it not even be named among you, as becomes saints.

4. Or foulness, or the talk of fools, or scurrility, things which are not to the purpose; but rather thanksgiving.

This is the second point in the Imitation of Christ, which is the subject of this Chapter. That the Ephesians people in general were open to the charge of fornication and uncleanness, as well as the other vices and follies

referred to in these verses, there is not much doubt, and being a great commercial centre, it is not unlikely their city was by no means free from the prevalence of what the Apostle is understood to mean by *avarice*, the practice of acquisition of money by chicanery, underhand, or dishonest means. All these things were permitted by the laws, and by public opinion; nor were they condemned by the heretics, but rather recommended and enforced, as is more than hinted in verse 6. Such things should not even be made the subject of conversation among Christians, any more than they would have been among the immediate followers of Jesus Christ, and in his presence. Filthy and foolish talking, obscene and ribald jesting, which ministers to sin, or does not reprove it, is also inconsistent with every aim and object of the Christian life, for the Christian looks forward to a time when he will be made perfect in sanctity in the presence of God. The word *εὐτραπελία*, translated by the Vulgate *currilitas*, is used by Aristotle as the designation of one of the moral virtues, that of urbanity; the wit, cheerfulness, promptness to give pleasure and entertainment in conversation, which everyone cultivates who wishes to render himself agreeable in society. But it is not necessary to suppose that in this sense the Apostle condemns it, within due bounds, and when practised for the sake of charity. There can be no doubt that the word had altered its meaning since the time of Aristotle, and was commonly used to describe what the great philosopher himself would hardly have recognised as tending to virtue, an indecorous and indecent wit and jocularly, tending only to laughter, unless it tended to something worse. It was the profession of flatterers, mimics, jesters, dancers, of women who ministered to pleasure. St. Chrysostom says that a man who in his talk is infamous, shameless, and obscene, is called *εὐτραπελος*, which is hardly what

Aristotle can have meant when he spoke of this as a virtue. Scurrility which is not *to the purpose, ad rem*, serves no useful end, and does not contribute to that which should be the object of life, the glory of God, and the happiness of our neighbour. The Greek has *unsuitable* or indecent. Not tending to our satisfaction, Theophylact. Since we are consecrated to God in baptism, and sealed with the Holy Spirit, we are guilty of sacrilege if we utter profane and filthy language, like King Balthasar when he profaned the sacred vessels of God's service. The same night Balthasar the Chaldean king was slain, Dan. v. 30. Of course this injunction applies with still greater force to priests and religious. *Rather thanksgiving*. The words *Deo gratias* were the ancient form of salutation in use among Christian people. See Saint Augustine, ep. 77.

5. For this know and understand, that every fornicator, or unclean, or covetous, which is the service of idols, has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6. Let no one lead you astray with empty words, for on account of these things the anger of God is coming upon the sons of distrust.

7. Be not therefore partakers with them.

8. For you once were darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk as sons of light.

9. (For the fruit of light is in all goodness and justice and truth;)

10. Proving what is well pleasing to God.

11. And communicate not with the fruitless works of darkness; but rather reprove them.

12. For what is done by them in secret, is disgraceful even to say.

The things which Saint Paul denounces and condemns in these verses and in verse 4 were not condemned or disapproved, either by the philosophers of antiquity, or by Simon

Magus and his disciples, but on the contrary, promoted and encouraged. On this account the Apostle makes and enforces with all possible emphasis and solemnity the assertion in the text, that they exclude those who do them from any inheritance in the kingdom of *Christ and God*. These words have only one article in the Greek, τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ, which will bear the meaning that only one Person is denoted; Christ our God. At the same time it is doubtful whether the translator of the Vulgate so understood it, or he would have written *Christi Dei* instead of *Christi et Dei*. The words *fornicator or unclean* put a distinction between simple fornication and other forms of impurity. The *covetous* either takes the goods of others unjustly, or places all his trust in riches. This the Apostle says is the service of idols. The Greek has, *who is an idolater*, and so St. Chrysostom reads it. For the avaricious makes money his God, and sacrifices in its worship heart, mind, soul, self, and his hopes for eternity. *Let no one lead you astray with vain words*. The old philosophers maintained that there was no evil in simple fornication, and the followers of Simon extended this to all other forms of impurity. They went further, and asserted that these things were pleasing to God, and might be acceptably offered as a sacrifice to him. Let not, therefore, either the philosopher or the heretic lead you astray with such *empty words*. Words, St. Jerome says, which are set forth with the ornaments of eloquence or poetry, and flatter sinners, but are *empty* of truth. For on account of these things the wrath of God *is coming*. The present tense with an inclusive reference to the future, as in 1 John ii., *Antichrist is coming*. So the judgment of God is coming, or will come, on those who teach or follow these false principles. *Sons of distrust* is a Hebrew idiom. The Greek has *sons of disobedience*, who are openly rebellious against the plain commands of the Creator of the world. *Be not made partakers* with them, by joining in their sins. You were once in the darkness of Gentile error, and so far might have found some excuse; but you are now enlightened by the faith and

grace of Christ. Walk therefore as sons of light, making it your object to study, examine, cherish, and carry out in practice, that which is the will of God concerning you. For the *fruit of light*, the outcome of the faith of Christ, is goodness, justice, truth, in opposition to the fruit of darkness, wrath, fraud, or avarice, and lies, referred to above, iv. 31. The fruit of the sunshine is the ripened grape, the growth of the dark dungeon the poisonous fungus. The Greek text has, *the fruit of the Spirit*. Hold no communication with the *fruitless works of darkness*. Do not do them, do not praise them, do not approve them, do not consent to others doing them, do not jest at them, do not speak of them, do not think of them. *Fruitless*, because they have no fruit of life eternal; their fruit is death. *Rather reprove them*, by taking no part in them, or, if necessary, protesting in words. For it is not sufficient to do well, if we tolerate and encourage, by flattery, complacency, or approval, the evil deeds of others. What these people do in their secret assemblies, is execrable even to be said. So the Syriac. St. Epiphanius says that this refers to the heretical followers of Simon Magus.

13. For all things that are proved are made manifest by light: for all that makes manifest is light.

14. On which account he says: Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten thee.

The Syriac has: All things are by light proved and revealed. The right way to reprove the darkness of evil, is by the light of good deeds; because it is the nature of light to illumine. The light of day brings into prominence all that had been hidden in the shades of night; so do good deeds bring out by contrast the evil deeds of others. As Christ, who is the Light of the world, illumines every man who comes into the world, so in proportion the Christian, who is a son of this Light, should illumine and enlighten his neighbour by his good deeds and his example. For a holy life

is a light which is not only conspicuous in itself, but sheds its radiance on, and is reflected from, all the objects around. The quotation in verse 14, as St. Thomas thinks, is from Isaias lx. 1. Rise, be enlightened, Jerusalem, for thy light is come. *Thy light* is Christ. Other writers think the words are taken from some other canonical book, which has been lost: they do not occur in the Scriptures literally as the Apostle gives them.

15. See, therefore, brethren, that you walk cautiously, not as fools, but as wise;

16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17. Therefore do not become imprudent, but understanding what is the will of God.

The Christian, who is a son of Light, and walks in the midst of light, should proceed in all he does with the knowledge and recollection of this truth, as one walks in the full flood of daylight, in the knowledge that he is open to the sight of all men. A man who walks in the daylight forgetting this, is liable, if he does not act foolishly, at least to look foolish. Christians should be *non quasi insipientes, sed ut sapientes*.

Redeeming the time, redeem the age in which you live by a just and holy life, as the city of Sodom would have been redeemed from destruction by ten just men, had ten been found in it. The days are evil, full of sorcery, paganism in its last degradation, heresies more terrible and monstrous still. It is for you, the followers of Christ, to redeem your age from the reproach of universal corruption. Do not allow the example of those around you to betray you into imprudence, incaution, or carelessness, but make it your study to understand and do the will of God. Otherwise the words, *the days are evil*, may be taken prophetically as signifying that persecution will shortly break out against you. The first great persecution of the Church, under Nero, commenced in

fact very shortly after the date at which this epistle is usually supposed to have been written. If you now enjoy an interval of comparative tranquillity, remember that it will not last for ever, and make the best use of the interval of time that remains to you, lest the storm burst upon you unawares, and your faith be endangered.

18. And be not intoxicated with wine, in which is luxury, but be filled with the Holy Spirit.

19. Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and playing in your hearts to the Lord.

20. Always for all things giving thanks, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the God and Father.

The assemblies of the heretics were orgies conducted with feasting and every kind of license, and they indulged freely in the use of wine, blasphemously pretending that this was the service of God. In this they were not to be imitated. *Be not intoxicated with wine.* The reference is not to the extreme degree of intoxication which we sometimes witness in northern countries, and which is produced generally by the use of the products of alcoholic distillation, and occasions insensibility, or sometimes absolute loss of consciousness. This is seldom produced by the use of wine, but wine nevertheless, taken in immoderate quantity, will easily occasion a degree of intoxication which for the time overthrows the balance of reason, and urges to vices of other kinds. *In which is luxury*, in Greek *ἀσωτία*, profligacy and extravagance. Rather *be filled with the Holy Spirit*, the principle of spiritual joy. And as the pagans, and the heretics, are accustomed to sing licentious love songs at their assemblies and entertainments, as an incitement to sin, so do you divide into choirs and sing responsively *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*. Psalm, in its etymological sense, includes music of any kind; in the sacred Scripture, and probably here, it especially

refers to the recitation of the Psalms of David, or compositions resembling them. The word *hymns* has almost the same meaning. *Spiritual* songs, such as tend to what is sacred and holy. The words *singing and playing* imply that such songs might be, and usually were, accompanied by musical instruments. This is also implied in the following couplet by St. Augustine, quoted by Cornelius á Lapide :

Non vox sed votum, non chordula musica, sed cor

Non cantans sed amans, cantat in aure Dei.

Continually giving thanks to God for all the mercies received from him. The Greek word is εὐχαριστοῦντες, and the meaning may be, joining daily in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, offered for all men in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God the Father. The words, τῷ Θεῷ καὶ πατρί have the same grammatical construction as τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ in verse 5.

21. Subject to one another in fear of Christ.

22. Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord ;

23. Because man is the head of woman, as Christ is the head of the Church ; himself is the Saviour of his body.

24. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so women to their husbands in all things.

The general principle of subordination of the inferior to the superior, and consideration of the inferior by the superior, necessary for the existence of any human society, and not less so in the Catholic Church, the kingdom of Christ, is stated by the Apostle in verse 21, and he proceeds to apply it, in the remainder of this chapter, and part of the following one, in detail to the three relations, 1, of husband and wife ; 2, of parents and children ; and 3, of masters and servants. In a sense, all are equal before God, but all have not the same functions and duties, and the due discharge of these duties involves consideration for the rights of others, whether placed above us or below. The Greek text reads *in fear of God*.

The name *Christ*, in the Vulgate, points the reference *as to the Lord*, in the following verse. Every inferior sees Christ in his superiors; because from God all power and subordination comes. And every superior is to his inferior the vicar of God and of Christ. The inferior, called on to obey, should look to Christ, and for Christ's fear and reverence, be obedient to the master or superior. Thus he will be obedient to God, and to Christ, the supreme Lord of all. *Christ became obedient for us, even to death*, and this great example every Christian should recall, when called on by a superior to obey. And as the exinanition and humility of Christ, even to servitude and death, was infinite praise and glory to God, so by uniting our servitude and obedience to the obedience and humility of Christ, we honour God in Christ, with Christ, and through Christ, in the highest degree possible to us. But on the same principle superiors are bound to regard the welfare of those placed under them, for it is for the welfare of the inferior that the superior exists. *Ideo præsunt ut prosint.*

Women are to be subject to their husbands, *sicut Domino*, not as to a lord, for in this case he would have said *sicut dominis*, but to Christ the Lord of all. The woman, therefore, should regard her husband as if he was Christ. And as Christ is the head of the Church, and the Saviour of it, as of his own body, so the husband is the protector and guardian of his wife. *Corporis ejus* in the Vulgate is a Hebraism for *corporis sui*; the pronoun does not occur in the Greek or Syriac. The submission of the wife to the husband is as extensive as that of the Church to Christ; *in all things*; but as Tertullian observes, we may here understand the words used Col. iii. 18, *Sicut oportet in Domino*, within the limits of the Christian discipline. The woman is to honour, love, and confide in her husband, as the person by whom she is supported, protected, and supplied with all she needs. For the Church honours Christ, trusts in Christ, and serves Christ for love.

25. Husbands, love your wives, as also Christ loved the Church, and gave himself up for her.

26. That he might sanctify her, cleansing her by the laver of water in the word of life ;

27. That he might present to himself the Church glorious, having not a spot or wrinkle, or anything like it ; but that she may be holy and immaculate.

28. So also should husbands love their wives as their own bodies ; for who loves his wife loves himself.

29. For none ever held his own flesh in hatred, but feeds and warms it, as Christ the Church.

30. Because we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31. On this account man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.

32. This is a great sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in the Church.

33. Nevertheless you also each, let every man love his wife as himself ; and let the wife fear her husband.

This is the other aspect of the picture. If the woman is to regard her husband as Christ, treat him as she would treat Christ, the man is bound to regard and treat his wife as Christ does the Church. He loved the Church ; the man should love his wife. Christ gave his life for the Church ; the man should give the labour of his life for his wife's support, risk his life, if necessary, in her defence. Christ hallowed and sanctified the Church, made her holy, keeps her holy, will present her to himself perfect and immaculate at last. So the husband should be tolerant of the imperfections of his wife, and strive to render her, with himself, holy and worthy of Christ. He should love his wife as he loves his own body, which by natural instinct he feeds, warms, clothes, and adorns ; so should he feed and adorn his wife ; *as Christ the Church*, which he has washed in the laver of

Baptism, feeds with his body and blood, adorns with his grace. Here Saint Paul passes parenthetically from the subject he is treating, namely, the relation of husband and wife, and dwells for a moment on the higher and grander analogy or resemblance with which he has illustrated it. *We are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones*, applying to Christ and the Church the words of Adam spoken to our first mother Eve. Gen. ii. 23. As Eve was formed from the side of Adam while he slept, so is the Church formed from the water and the blood that flowed from the side of Christ sleeping on the cross. The Apostle adds the words that follow (verse 31 of the text), which declare that henceforward man and wife shall be *one flesh*. Only in figure and metaphor; though in the case of Eve and Adam it was literally true, as also in the case of Christ and the Church. This intimate union of Deity with humanity, the Creator with the creature, is a great sacrament, or mystery, transcending all human understanding or knowledge. The love of the Creator for the creature is far deeper and more tender than any earthly affection, the union that satisfies it more intimate than any possible to mortality. Marriage conveys only a distant and feeble resemblance or suggestion of this sublime and unknown reality. Therefore, in conclusion, the subject may be summed up in this practical injunction: let every man who is married love his wife as he loves himself; and the wife be careful to fear her husband.

The interpretation above given of the words *sacramentum hoc magnum est*, though it is not that adopted by Bellarmine, is accepted by Cajetan, Vasquez, and other writers. The Apostle has been speaking of marriage as it existed from the beginning of the world, and among pagan nations, before Christ elevated it to the rank of a sacrament; and having used the phrase *this is a great sacrament, or mystery*, he proceeds to say that he speaks, not of marriage, but of that which marriage resembles and represents, the union between Christ and the Church, at once his Body and his Bride.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

He redeems the time, who seeks to make reparation by tears and penance for the sins of his former life. He redeems the time, who, having previously wasted it in luxury, in sin, in sloth, or in tepidity, endeavours to recover the loss by greater fervour, multiplies the acts of virtue, makes his fasts more frequent, redoubles his acts of mortification, accumulates as many good works as possible in the slender allowance of time that yet remains to him in this mortal life. He redeems the time, who forsakes the world and all worldly advantages, that he may have time for uninterrupted converse with God. What, Saint Augustine asks (*Hom. 1 inter 50 tom. 10*), is the meaning of buying time, unless it be to gain time to devote to the acquisition and appropriation of eternal good, even at the price of the sacrifice, if that be necessary, of the temporal good of earth? He redeems the time who consents to suffer loss rather than throw away time and tranquillity in the prosecution of suits of law. As you willingly part with money to buy bread, says the same Father elsewhere (*Serm. 24 de verbis Apostoli*), so with equal readiness suffer the loss of it to purchase peace. And he redeems the time, the time which others waste in drinking and feasting, in license, or in amusement, when he consecrates these hours to sacred vigils, in the recitation, as the Apostle recommends, of psalms and spiritual songs. Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit.



CHAPTER VI.

1. Sons, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is just.

2. Honour thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment in promise ;

3. That it may be well to thee, and thou be long-lived upon earth.

4. And you, fathers, do not provoke your sons to wrath ; but educate them in discipline and reproof of the Lord.

Ch. vi. In this chapter the Apostle urges the duty of parents and children, of masters and servants, to one another ; advises the Ephesian Christians to arm themselves in the panoply of God ; requests their prayers for support in his approaching interview with the emperor ; and concludes the epistle with his apostolic benediction.

This is the second branch or division of the general injunction in v. 21, *Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ*. The Apostle has already treated of the duties of wives and husbands ; in these verses he deals with the relation of parents and children. *Sons* stands here for either sex ; the Greek has τέκνα, children. Obey your parents *in the Lord*, it being evidently the design and intention of the Creator of the world that children, while young, should be obedient to their parents. And in accordance with the law of Christ, that is, except when the command given is evidently inconsistent with Christian obligation, which in pagan times might happen not unfrequently. *Honour thy father and mother* is the first commandment which has a special promise attached to it, namely, length of life, a promise adapted to the hopes and wishes of the rising generation of the age in which it was given, before whom the hope of eternal happiness in heaven

had not as yet been clearly set forth, but who were encouraged to look forward to earthly prosperity and enjoyment in the land promised to their fathers. St. Thomas observes, in one of his minor works, that children hold life from parents as vassals hold a feof from a king. The soldier retains the feof as long as he pays the homage and yields the service, and children are similarly entitled to the preservation of life while they honour their parents. The rebel soldier is spoiled of his possession, and rebellious children deserve to be deprived of life. The Apostle does not mean that the literal promise holds good in every case; for the temporal prosperity of the Hebrews of old was only a figure of the eternal joy of heaven, promised to the obedient and faithful Christian. If God does not always give long life on earth, he will give an eternal life hereafter. Parents, in their turn, are not to provoke their children to wrath by excessive severity. Neither on the other hand (this is understood) are they to do them the injustice of leaving their faults entirely uncorrected. Educate them in the discipline and reproof *of the Lord*, with such instruction as will guide them in the knowledge of Christ's law; such correction as is moderate, gentle, suited to the doctrine of Christ, who said, Learn of me, for I am gentle and humble; and such warning and advice as will prepare them to meet the perils of the life they are about to enter.

5. Slaves, obey your carnal masters with fear and trembling, in simplicity of your hearts, as Christ:

6. Not serving to the eye, as pleasing men; but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

7. Serving with good will as to the Lord and not to men.

8. Knowing that every one, whatever good he shall have done, will receive this from the Lord, whether slave or free.

9. And you, masters, do the same to them, forbearing threats, knowing that both their Lord and yours is in the heavens; and acceptance of persons is not with him.

Your carnal masters, those who have the control of your bodies, which according to the laws existing in those times was absolute, though doubtless under restriction and control from public opinion. *With fear and trembling*, fear to displease, not altogether excluding fear of corporal chastisement, by which large establishments of slaves were then ordinarily kept under control. The Apostle is not defending the existence of this state of things, which had arisen from the wars carried on for centuries in the countries near the Levant, and the capture of large numbers of prisoners, but he gives directions as to the wisest and best course to be pursued under the circumstances, until a better condition of society should arise. *In the simplicity of your hearts*, not with feigned alacrity, but a genuine desire to please, *as serving Christ*, seeing Christ in the master to whom your service is rendered. The same idea is restated and expanded in slightly different terms in verses 6, 7. Serving with good will, or benevolence, as to the Lord and not to man. For you know that from his hands you will receive an eternal reward for any good thing you do. Masters are to *do the same*, act on the same principle in relation to their servants, treating them with humanity, kindness, and benevolence, and the respect due to all men, made in God's image, remembering that the Lord and Master of all men dwells in heaven, and before Him all men are equal. This statement is in direct contradiction of the opinion of the philosophers, that the majority of mankind are created and exist only for the pleasure of a few. *Personarum acceptatio non est apud eum.*

10. For the rest, brethren, be strengthened in the Lord, and in the power of his virtue.

11. Put on you the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12. For not to us is the wrestling against flesh and blood; but against princes and powers, against the world-rulers of

this darkness, against the spiritual things of wickedness, in the heavenly places.

13. On this account take the armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and stand in all things perfect.

For the rest. The Apostle has laid the foundation of Christian morality on a sound basis, in accordance with the commands and appointments of the Creator of the world, in the injunctions given from the beginning of Chapter iv. to this point, in opposition to the false doctrine of the heretics. In conclusion, he now sets before his readers, with extraordinary energy of language, the critical nature of the warfare they had to maintain against these pestilent errors, which he traces to their true origin, the machinations of the devil, who was endeavouring to overthrow the Christian religion in its infancy. So insidious was the danger they had to combat, that it would require all their resolution and all their watchfulness to preserve their faith. *Be strengthened* in the might of the power of the Lord. Not the strength only, but the consciousness of strength, and the courage and determination arising from that consciousness. Put on the armour of God, in the Greek the *panoply*, or complete armour. As if he said, we have a crafty foe to contend with, and no part must be left unguarded, lest you be wounded there, as Achilles received his death-wound in his heel, though the rest of his body was protected. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood. Our foes are not men, who are flesh and blood, but evil spirits who cannot be killed, subtle, strong, malicious; though they may make use of evil men as their instruments. They are *princes* and *powers*, once of heaven, since of all the heavenly orders some angels accompanied Lucifer in his fall. *The world-rulers of this darkness.* The Greek word *κοσμοκράτορας*, Saint Jerome thinks, was coined by Saint Paul, being used nowhere else than in this passage. Tertullian, on Marc v. has *mundi tenentes*. The term used in the Vulgate, *mundi rectores*,

should be construed as one word, as in the Greek, and this will account grammatically for the genitive which follows, *tenebrarum harum*. The Syriac has, *the possessors of this dark world*. Not that evil spirits are the possessors or rulers of the world by God's appointment, but only by usurpation and conquest, and that only over the souls of men who willingly submit to their power. Probably, therefore, by the *this dark world*, we are to understand the infidels, heretics, and idolaters, of whom the world was then full, in opposition to whom the faithful are called *sons of light*, sup. v. 8. Christ speaks of the devil as *the prince of this world*, Joh. xiv. 30. *Spiritualia nequitiae* is a literal translation of the Greek; it is a Hebraism for spiritual wickedness, or wicked spirits. And they dwell *in the heavenly places*. The whole of this passage is almost an exact description of the powers or intelligences, whom the followers of Simon supposed to dwell in the planets, and determine the fate of mankind, and who were therefore the objects of their devotion, and the language of the Apostle implies that the confidence of the heretics was really reposed in evil spirits. Our foes are invisible, in the air around us, innumerable, *my name is legion*, completely depraved and wicked, invincibly crafty and cunning, so powerful that they rule the world, hate us irreconcilably, are resolutely bent on our destruction. How, then, Saint Chrysostom asks, can we hope to overcome them, if we live in pleasure, and unarmed? *On this account take the armour of God*, the description of which is given in the following verses, that you may be able to resist *in the evil day*. The evil day is either the day of temptation, or the day of persecution, which the Apostle foresaw; or possibly the day of death, when the spirits of darkness will assemble their forces for a final assault. *And stand in all things perfect*, that is perfectly and completely armed for the conflict. Or else, as the Greek has, *having completed all*, and fought your fight, you will *stand* in the judgment of the last day. The Syriac has :

that when in all things you are fully prepared, you may be able to *stand* firm in the profession of the true faith.

14. Stand therefore with your loins girded in truth, and clothed in the cuirass of justice.

15. And your feet shod in the preparation of the gospel of peace.

16. In all taking the shield of faith, in which you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one.

17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Stand, in order of battle, *your loins girded in truth*, a firm and resolute adherence to the one true Catholic and Apostolic faith, which you have received as God's *truth*. Clothed in the cuirass, or coat of mail of *justice*, an habitual practice of the commands of God in all the relations of life, as set forth in the preceding chapters. Your feet shod with the preparation of *the Gospel of peace*, continually ready to maintain the Gospel of Christ in opposition to heretics and pagans. This is doubtless said with especial reference to those of the Ephesian Christians who were most thoroughly acquainted with the evangelical doctrine, and able to instruct and convince their neighbours, but all could illustrate its teaching by a Christian life. It is called the Gospel of *peace* because it proclaimed God's peace to man, reconciliation in Christ, and remission of sins. Boldness, confidence, and alacrity are required for such a task, but also the nature of the promises they proclaimed was calculated to supply these. One who walks barefoot over rough places must proceed with timidity and caution; but if well shod or booted, he will move with boldness and freedom. Tepidity and timidity are generally associated together, and so are fervour and fearlessness. *In all*, the Greek has *upon* or *over* all, take *the shield of faith*, the creed of the Catholic Church, which will meet and extinguish all the fiery darts of the wicked

one. These fiery darts are the insidious arguments, in the guise of philosophy, by which the heretics supported their monstrous system of error. The title here given to the devil, in the Greek, *the wicked one*, is the same by which Christ designated him in the Lord's prayer, on both occasions on which he delivered the formula, deliver us from the wicked one, Matt. vi. 13, Luc. xi. 4. The Vulgate has here the *most wicked*. Take for a *helmet* the assured *hope* of everlasting salvation, as the Apostle explains 1. Thes. v. 8. *The sword of the Spirit* is the word of God, by means of which Christ overcame the devil in the temptation, and put him to flight.

18. With all prayer and entreaty praying at every time in spirit, and in it watching in all earnestness and entreaty on behalf of all the saints.

19. And for me, that speech may be given me in opening my mouth with confidence, to make known the mystery of the Gospel ;

20. For which I discharge an embassy in chains, so that in it I may have boldness to speak as I ought.

The Apostle looked forward with some degree of nervous apprehension, as this passage clearly shews, to his approaching interview with Nero, to whom he considered himself, as it were, accredited as an ambassador from a still greater King. He was most anxious to deliver his message clearly, faithfully, and fully, knowing how much might possibly depend on it. He makes the same earnest petition, on the same occasion, in the Epistle to the Colossians, iv. 3. The intercessions offered by the Church for the Apostle of the nations on this occasion were doubtless heard, for although neither the emperor, nor his minister, the philosopher Seneca, were converted to the faith of Christ, they treated the ambassador of Christ with respect, and set him at

liberty to pursue his apostolic labours in many distant countries, until the outbreak of the persecution some few years later.

21. But that you also may know how I am circumstanced, and what I am doing, all will be made known to you by Tychicus, the most beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord ;

22. Whom I send to you for the purpose, that you may know my circumstances, and that he may console your hearts.

23. Peace to the brethren, and charity with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24. Grace with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption. Amen.

Tychicus was the bearer of this Epistle, as also of that to the Colossians, written at the same time. He was probably a native of Ephesus, and was very useful at this time as Saint Paul's messenger. See Acts xx. 4, 2 Tim. iv. 12, Tit. iii. 12. The Greek word rendered *minister* in the Vulgate signifies a deacon, and doubtless at this time he held that office in the Church. The Ephesians had heard of the Apostle's imprisonment at Rome, and were anxious lest he should be treated with cruelty, and lest his life should be endangered. On both these points Tychicus would be able in some degree to reassure them. The Apostle prays that the brethren may have *peace*, and that their charity and faith may be augmented by God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in the purity of life which he loves and calls for, and whose love is not corrupted and diluted by the love of this passing world. In the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic, there are here added the following words : Written to the Ephesians from Rome, and sent by Tychicus.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

“By all prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the Spirit, and in the same watching with all instance and supplication for all the Saints.” *The Saints*, according to Saint Paul, stand in need of the constant, earnest, and increasing prayers of the faithful upon earth. This cannot be understood of the Saints in glory, for their salvation is secure, and their happiness, since they are already admitted to the Beatific Vision of God, admits of no increase until the day of the resurrection from the dead. In the language of Scripture all Christian people living in the communion of the Holy Catholic Church, are Saints; and they stand in need of earnest intercessory prayer, for the very reason that the Saints in glory do not need it, namely, that their salvation is not yet assured, their perseverance not yet certain. The holy souls in Purgatory are also Saints. It has been said that even the least favoured of them is nearer to God and further advanced in sanctity than the greatest Saint on earth. Yet they also, for a different reason, stand in great need of the prayers of the faithful upon earth, because they can now do nothing to obtain merit for themselves. It is evident from the earnestness with which the Apostle impresses and urges this duty of prayer for the Saints, prayer with all supplication, prayer at all times, prayer in the Spirit, prayer with watching, prayer with all instance, prayer with all entreaty—that he was not, as some heretics have maintained, a fatalist. If the salvation of the saints, as long as they still live on earth, was a matter of certainty because they are saints—if by an eternal decree from before the creation of the world they are irrevocably delivered from everlasting damnation and numbered among the flock of God’s elect—such earnest supplication on their behalf would be superfluous. If by another such decree they are excluded, it would be useless. According to the teaching of Saint Paul, the earnest supplications of Christian people are

to be offered for all Saints, because upon those prayers the salvation of the Saints, as long as their perseverance is still doubtful, and their fall from faith still possible, in a great degree depends. Such is God's appointment and His pleasure, the grounds and reasons of which we do not know, a mystery we cannot explain, but must believe, for every page of Holy Scripture bears witness to its truth.



THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

P R E F A C E .

THE city of Philippi was founded by, and derives its name from, Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. It is situated in the eastern extremity of Macedonia, not far from the frontier of Thrace. It was near this spot that the decisive battle which occasioned the final overthrow of the Roman republic was fought, B.C. 42. Philippi was a Roman military colony, and its citizens enjoyed the Roman franchise, a circumstance to which the Apostle incidentally alludes in the course of this Epistle.

In A.D. 53, Saint Paul, being at Troas in Asia, was invited by a miraculous vision to cross over into Macedonia. He had not visited any part of Europe up to this time. He at once proceeded to Philippi, where his first convert was Lydia, a seller of purple, of that city. The Apostle and his companion, Sylvanus, were put in prison, but being miraculously set free, in consequence of an earthquake, left the place. Saint Paul, however, returned on more than one other occasion, and the Christian Church of Philippi became numerous and flourishing.

During the imprisonment of the Apostle at Rome, A.D. 62-64, the Christians of Philippi, who regarded him with the greatest reverence and affection, sent to him their bishop Epaphroditus, with a supply of money, and directions to

render him every support and assistance possible. Epaphroditus carried out this mission with so much energy and devotion, and with so little regard to himself, that he fell sick, and nearly lost his life. As soon as he was able to travel, Saint Paul sent him back to Philippi, with this letter. He heartily thanks the Philippian Christians for their kindness and sympathy; congratulates them on the earnestness and sincerity of their faith, and on the persecutions they had suffered for the cause of Christ; urges them to continue to live worthily of the Gospel of Christ; and warns them against false apostles, whom he stigmatises as dogs, evil-doers, enemies of the cross of Christ. He expresses himself hopefully as to his approaching liberation from prison. The tone of this letter throughout breathes encouragement and hope.



CHAPTER I.

Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the Saints in Jesus Christ who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter I. In this chapter the Apostle expresses his gratitude and affection towards the Christians of Philippi; informs them as to his own situation and circumstances at Rome; expresses the conviction that he will live to return to them; and exhorts them to courage and constancy.

Paul and Timotheus. Timotheus was highly honoured and valued by the Christians of Philippi, and regarded them with great affection, as appears from ii. 20. For this reason the Apostle adds his name to the salutation, but in verse 3 he recurs to the singular number, *gratias ago*. He does not here style himself Apostle, because he prefers to adopt a title shared by Timothy, *Servants of Jesus Christ*. It is the highest of all possible dignities, Saint Chrysostom says, to be the servant of Jesus Christ, and not only be called so. If you so call yourself, see that you are so in reality. You glory in the name; but have reason to blush for the work you do. Fear what Christ says in the Gospel: Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of the heavens; but who does the will of My Father. Matt. vii. 21.

With the bishops and deacons. The bishops of the other cities of Macedonia, to whom it was intended that this epistle should be communicated, with the deacons who assisted them. There is no mention of *priests*, because in the

Apostolic times, when the numbers of the Christian communities were very limited, priests were rarely required to assist the bishop, and they hardly yet appear as a distinct order. When Saint Gregory, for instance, went to Neocæsarea, and found only seventeen Christians in the place, he would hardly have required the aid of a priest. Probably, therefore, under the term *bishops* the priests at Philippi are intended to be included. Thus it is apparently understood by the Syriac version, which reads : *with the priests and deacons*.

The expression *saints in Jesus Christ* suggests the reflection that union with Jesus Christ is the only source of sanctity. No one separated from Jesus Christ can in reality be holy. All who are grafted into Christ are holy, and more holy in proportion as they are more fully and perfectly united with him. Union with Christ in mind, heart, and work, sanctifies the whole man. This union is accomplished by faith, hope, and charity, and sustained, augmented, and drawn closer by continual prayer. Persons professing other religions, or who do not belong to the communion of the Catholic Church, or are devotees of some system of false philosophy, not unfrequently exhibit qualities which resemble Christian graces, and are externally the same, as liberality, justice, courage, fortitude, chastity, generosity, philanthropy, and the like. But these do not constitute real sanctity, and are always in reality referable to some motive inferior to the love of God for his own sake, which is the principle of the Christian life. And though these qualities, excellent as far as they go, are often valuable for temporal ends, they do not advance the kingdom of Christ, or tend to the salvation of souls.

2. *Grace to you and peace, &c.* This is the Apostle's invariable form of salutation, as including all interior and exterior good.

3. I give thanks to my God in every memory of you.

4. Always in all my prayers for you all, with joy making deprecation,

5. For your communication in the Gospel of Christ, from the first day until now.

6. Trusting this, that he who began a good work in you, will complete it to the day of Jesus Christ.

3. *I thank my God in every memory of you.* Literally, *in all my memory of you.* He was conscious, St. Chrysostom says, how many great and good gifts God had bestowed on them, and therefore he glorifies God and prays for them at the same time. He gives thanks for what is past, he prays for what is to come. He glorifies God for their good works, done from their first conversion; he prays they may persevere until the day of Christ. Thank God for holy beginnings, and for good works done, but pray for perseverance. It is not the Christian's beginning, but his end, upon which eternity depends. Not he who begins well, but who *perseveres to the end, shall be saved.*

4. *With joy making deprecation.* The Apostle prays *with joy* for the Philippians. This is greatly to their praise, and a proof of the graces and excellences they exhibited. They kept their faith, persevered from their first conversion in good works, had the purpose of perseverance in their hearts. Nothing can give greater joy to the Saints of God than to see this, and *with joy* will they intercede for us. For if there is *joy in heaven* for the conversion of a sinner, how much more for his perseverance in good.

5. *For your communication in the Gospel of Christ.* The Greek has *to the Gospel*, omitting *of Christ*. This is the cause of *the joy* referred to in the last verse. The Latin interpreters generally understand by it your participation by faith in the privileges and promises of the Gospel, from the time you first accepted it until now. But St. Chrysostom and other Greek writers think it refers to the generosity and munificence with which the Philippians had contributed to

the support of their teachers and the preachers of the Gospel, from the date of their conversion until the present time, when hearing of St. Paul's imprisonment they crowned this liberality by sending him a large sum of money by the hands of Epaphroditus, to which he makes further reference in verse 18. This interpretation is for several reasons the more probable one. It was certainly one of the principal objects for which the Epistle was written, to return to them the thanks of St. Paul for this contribution to his wants. The same expression, only more fully expanded, is used in iv. 15, *communication in giving and receiving*, which undoubtedly has reference to the collection of money for the service of the Church. Several other passages in the writings of St. Paul might be quoted, which prove that he was in the habit of using the word *communication* in this sense, as in this Epistle, iv. 14, *you have done well in communicating with my afflictions*; Rom. xii. 13, *communicating with the needs of the Saints*; Gal. vi. 6, *let the catechised communicate with the catechiser*; Heb. xiii. 16, *forget not well-doing and communicating*. The expression of the Greek in this place indicates the same thing, *to* or *for the Gospel*, for its extension and propagation. The verse may therefore be paraphrased thus: I glorify God, and when praying for you I do so with joy, not only because you have believed the Gospel, and faithfully retained your confidence in it, but because you have displayed your solicitude for the salvation also of others, by giving me sympathy and substantial help wherever I went, and united your own zeal and diligence with mine in spreading the cause of Christ; supplying me, and those who were engaged in the same labours as myself, with what we required for our temporal necessities. This you have done, not once and again, but continually, from the date of your first conversion until now, when you have sent me substantial aid and support in my imprisonment, by the hands of Epaphroditus, your bishop. St. Chrysostom adds: Therefore to give aid in money is communication to the Gospel; and to cherish

and support the preacher of the Gospel, is to share his crown. Thus it is in your power to share the crowns and honours laid up in heaven for Apostles and holy men, by giving them the support of your advocacy and of your purse, by consoling them in trouble, supplying their wants, aiding their ministry by any means that may be within your power. You admire the angelic life of the holy hermits of the desert, the Apostolic virtues of prelates and holy priests, and mourn for the wide interval that separates you from them; yet it is in your power to *communicate* with them, by support, aid, and service. And this by the kindness and benignity of God, who has thus opened out to the more negligent and weak, unequal to the rough passage of the ascetic life, another road by which they may attain the same end.

Some people are rich in temporal things, and poor in those that belong to the spirit. Yet they can in this way obtain a share of the virtues of the Saints, and the merits of Apostles. Others are poor equally in the things of time and the graces of the spirit, yet even these can enrich themselves with the merits and spiritual wealth of holy men, by uniting themselves with them by their advocacy and their prayers.

6. St. Paul had a firm trust and confidence that God, whose grace had begun this good work, would enable it to continue *until the day of Christ*, the last judgment. Of this day, the Apostle invariably speaks as if it were near at hand, that we may be always ready for it. See 1 Thess. iv. 14, &c. And in iv. 5 of this Epistle he says expressly, *the Lord is near*.

7. As it is just for me to feel this for you all, because I have you in my heart and in my chains, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, that you should all be sharers in my joy.

8. For God is my witness how I desire you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9. And this I pray, that your charity may abound more and more in knowledge and in all sense;

10. That you may approve the better, that you may be sincere and without offence to the day of Christ,

11. Filled with the fruit of justice through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

7. *It is just for me to feel this.* This confidence which I have expressed, namely, that God will give you grace to persevere in charity until the day of Christ, is justified, first, by my ardent affection for you, *I have you in my heart*, which encourages me to pray earnestly for your perseverance; and next, because by so generously contributing to my necessities, and by the sympathy and support you tender to me, you are become partakers in my imprisonment, and I have your aid, countenance, and authority, thus publicly conveyed, to the *apology* or *defence* of the Gospel of Christ, which I am continually conducting at Rome, and your open support is a *confirmation* and strengthening of what I teach. In all these three things I feel and know that you are with me, by your ardent sympathy, your advocacy, and your prayers. And you are partakers also of the *joy* I experience in witnessing the progress of Christ's truth, and the establishment and extension of the Church in Rome. The Greek text has *grace* for *joy*, the two words χαρὰς and χάρις being very similar, and one easily substituted for another. *Partakers of my grace* would signify a share in the privilege and honour I enjoy of being a herald of Christ's Gospel, and one of the founders of the Roman Church. The Philippians, by contributing liberally to the wants of the Apostle, obtained a partnership in the merits of his *chains*, his *apology*, his *confirmation* of the truth of Christ. Thus may one who is rich in this world's goods, or possesses worldly influence, purchase a share in the merits of the saints. He is like an elm, says St. Gregory (Hom. 20 in Evang.), fruitless itself, but rich in the abundant produce of the vine which clings to it. Men in secular life, within the Church, have not the gifts and graces of the spiritual life, but when by their liberality they support holy

men who are filled with these gifts, they bear the vine and are enriched and ornamented with its fruits.

8. *God is my witness, how I long for you all.* The Apostle cannot express his affection by words that come from his own heart, and has recourse to the heart of Jesus Christ. He loves the Philippians with the heart of Christ, and with something of the vehemence and fire of that sacred Heart, longs earnestly for their salvation and eternal happiness. The Latin word *viscera*, like the Greek word corresponding to it, includes the heart and all the other internal organs of life. It is used in figure to represent the ardent and supernatural love of Jesus Christ for the people he has redeemed.

9. *I pray that your charity may abound more and more.* The Greek, *still more and more*. Charity is insatiable, says St. Chrysostom, without bound, limit, or measure. On this account the Apostle prays that the charity of the Philippians may increase beyond all measurement or limit. But he prays also that this charity may grow in *knowledge* and *prudence*, for without this we may be blinded ourselves, and leaders of the blind. *Knowledge* of the truth of God, *prudence* in the conduct of life. For this term the Vulgate has *sensus*, or tact, as the translation of the Greek word *αἴσθησις*, which signifies intellectual and moral perception of what is noble, and beautiful, and good.

10. Charity combined with *knowledge* and *perception* will enable you to distinguish what is best, *the better things*, *ῥετιονα*. This is the first effect. The second is, to give you purity, integrity, sincerity of conscience before God. And the third, you will be able to continue in your Christian course, and persevere, without stumbling, *without offence*, encountering no difficulties in your faith or obstacles to your salvation which grace will not enable you to overcome, *until the day of Christ*. The Apostle does not say, *the day of your death*, evidently expecting that in the case of most of them this would be anticipated by the speedy coming of Christ to judgment.

11. *Filled with the fruits of justice.* A fourth result of charity,

combined with *knowledge*. An abundant exercise of the holy works which come from the grace of God given you in your justification. *Justice* is the condition in which we are placed by *justification*, and its fruits are the graces of the Christian life. And these graces tend to that which is the ultimate end and object for which you were created, redeemed, justified, and endowed with grace of perseverance, *the glory and praise of God*, from whose grace your salvation proceeds. This is also, therefore, the supreme and ultimate object of the Apostle's prayer for the Philippians, that they may abound in charity, in knowledge, and in good works, for all these tend *to the glory and praise of God*.

12. But I wish you to know, brethren, that what has happened to me has turned out rather to the advancement of the Gospel.

13. So that my chains became manifest in Christ in the whole palace and in all other places ;

14. And many of the brethren in the Lord, confiding in my chains, dared more freely and fearlessly to speak the word of God.

12. The Philippians were afraid the imprisonment of St. Paul would have the effect of retarding the progress of the Gospel, and one of the reasons for which they sent Epaphroditus to Rome was to obtain information on this point to relieve their anxiety. On this account the Apostle hastens to reassure them. His arrest in Judea, and conveyance to Rome as a prisoner, had greatly tended to promote the cause of Christ, by making his mission and message known. He had become a celebrated political prisoner, and everyone enquired the cause of his arrest and appeal to the Emperor, and this led them to investigate the relations in which he stood to the Jewish government and religion, in which the controversy originated. So that every one in Rome, in the palace and elsewhere, knew who St.

Paul was, and for what purpose he had come to Rome. The result was that a large number of the Romans, some of them persons of influence in the government and among the citizens, embraced the faith of Christ. The Latin word *prætorium*, which is used in the Greek text as well as in the Vulgate, signifies originally a general's tent, and the Emperor being the generalissimo of the army, it came to be applied to the palace in which he resided, and in a wide sense to the whole staff of officials in the service of the government he administered. Many of the Christians in Rome, who were before afraid of becoming conspicuous, were emboldened by this new state of things to proclaim the Gospel of Christ fully and frequently, for they could now do so without fear. It is evident, though the Apostle does not say so, that the more widely he was known, the deeper must have been the admiration and astonishment occasioned by his lofty character and supernatural gifts with which he was endowed. Ultimately, as it well known, he triumphed over his opponents and was set free, not long after the date of this epistle.

15. Some indeed even through envy and contention, but some also of goodwill, proclaim Christ.

16. Some of charity, knowing that I am posted for the defence of the Gospel.

17. And some of contention announce Christ not sincerely, thinking that they are stirring up pressure to my chains.

18. What then? So long as every way, whether through occasion, or through truth, Christ is announced, in this I both rejoice and shall rejoice.

15. *Some indeed through envy and contention*, finding that Saint Paul's preaching and his imprisonment had procured him importance and celebrity in the palace and the city, were desirous of acquiring the same distinction for themselves, and accordingly imitated his example. Others sincerely

gave him their assistance and support, supplying his place by going where his imprisonment prevented his going himself.

17. *Stirring up pressure to my chains.* In the Greek, adding sorrow or affliction to my imprisonment. Judging the feelings of the Apostle by their own, they supposed he would be grieved at witnessing the distinction and honour which was conferred upon others, and that the pangs of envy would be added to the bitterness of his bonds and imprisonment. This is the obvious and natural interpretation; yet St. Chrysostom, and other writers following him, understand their object to have been to sharpen and increase the persecution which the Apostle was enduring by rousing the suspicion of Nero and his ministers. This seems the less probable, because they would thus be drawing down persecution upon themselves, and would be the first to encounter it; while they would be so far from detracting from the glory of the Apostle, that they would be in great danger of increasing it by procuring for him the crown of martyrdom.

18. If Christ is preached, and his Gospel made more widely known, that is in any case a subject of rejoicing. And I shall rejoice, and have reason to rejoice at it, in time to come: which seems like a prophetic anticipation of the future conversion of the great city of Rome to the faith of Jesus Christ, a result undoubtedly owing in great degree to the exertions of Saint Paul, and those who associated themselves with him in spreading the Gospel. *Whether through occasion or through truth.* *Occasion* or opportunity of acquiring renown, giving vent to their feeling of envy and jealousy, adding to my sorrows, sharpening my sufferings, or endangering my life. The Greek word is *πρόφασις*, pretext, false appearance, or pretence, which in effect comes to nearly the same thing, and is contrasted with *truth*, sincerity, honesty, and good faith.

The reign of the Emperor Claudius Nero lasted from A.D. 54-68. During the greater part of this time, including the two years of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, when

this Epistle was written (as well as those to the Galatians, Colossians, the first to Timothy, those to Titus, Philemon, and to the Hebrews), the government of the empire was admirably administered. The emperor's councils were directed by the philosopher Seneca, and in his domestic affairs he was guided by the advice of his father and mother. But about the year 64 his conduct underwent an extraordinary change, ascribable either to insanity, or to the influence of an unprincipled woman who had obtained ascendancy over him. He put Seneca to death, killed his own parents, burnt down the city of Rome, and instituted the first and most violent of the persecutions against the Christian Church, during which St. Peter, St. Paul, all the other Apostles who survived, except St. John, all the other principal preachers of the faith, and many thousands of Christians of all ranks and degrees, were put to death, in many cases with cruel torture. The emperor's conduct systematically outraged all human feeling, and the Roman people, in great grief at the downfall and depravation of the prince who had once been their idol, and the object of their hopes, at last rose in insurrection and put him to death. He was the last emperor of the house of Cæsar. His death was followed by a civil war, which encouraged the Jewish government to raise the standard of insurrection in the East. This terminated in the victory and supremacy of the Emperor Flavius Vespasianus, A.D. 69, who crushed the Jews, but extended his protection to the Christian Church.

19. For I know this will turn out well for me to salvation, through your prayer, and the subministration of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

20. According to my expectation and hope, that I shall be in nothing ashamed, but in every confidence, as always, so now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life, or through death.

21. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

19. *I know that this will turn to my salvation.* The Apostle evidently regarded with feelings of great joy, but also of great solemnity, the mission on which he was engaged, in bearing his testimony to the truth of Christ's resurrection and divine character, in presence of men of influence in the great city of the Roman world, and before the Emperor, at the risk of his own life, and was determined to discharge this duty fearlessly and with all Christian boldness, as if his eternal crown depended on it. I know that the preaching of Christ by others, whether actuated by jealousy, animosity against me, or sincerity and goodwill, will turn out to *my salvation*, and the faithful discharge of my mission, for I am sure and confident that through the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which will be granted to me through your prayers, I shall not be disappointed in the hope I entertain and cherish, and that *hope* is, that I shall be enabled, when the time comes, to speak with boldness and confidence, whether in the presence of the Emperor or elsewhere. If I live, Christ will be *magnified* by my preaching and my bodily life. If I die, he will be glorified in my death. In either case, his Gospel will be more widely known, his Church more firmly founded and established upon earth. If I live, I live for the service and glory of Christ ; if I die, I shall be still better off, for I shall be admitted to the enjoyment of his presence.

22. But if to live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my work, and what I shall choose I do not know.

23. For I am urged by two things at once, having the desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, much far better ;

24. But to remain in the flesh is necessary on your account.

25. And trusting this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all, to your advancement and joy of faith :

26. That your rejoicing may abound in Christ Jesus in me, through my coming to you.

22. The meaning of the Greek text of this verse seems to be, *I do not know* whether *the fruit of my work*, the result of the struggle in which I am now engaged, will be my continued life in the flesh, or *which I should choose* if the choice were left to me. Saint Chrysostom is of opinion that the choice of life or death was given to the Apostle, and that he hesitated between inclination on one side and the interests of the Church on the other. It is not, however, necessary to take his words so literally as this, and it appears from his language in the next chapter that he regarded his life or death as uncertain, like all other contingent and future events.

23. *I am urged by two at once*, two equally balanced aspirations and desires. *I desire to be dissolved*, set free from the chain of the body with which the soul is bound. As in Eccles. xii. 7. *The spirit returns to God who gave it*. The inferior animals at death are *resolved* into the elements of which they are composed; the soul of man is *dissolved* from the chain of the body, after which the body, like the body of the brutes, is resolved into its elements. This dissolution is something good and desirable; because it makes the soul impassable, impeccable, celestial, and divine; or, as St. Bernard says, sets men free from pain, sin, and peril. See a further elucidation of this subject in the note of Cornelius à Lapide on this place. St. Augustine says of St. Paul: He who desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ, does not die with patience. On the contrary, he lives with patience and dies with delight and joy.

Multo magis melius, much more better, means better beyond all comparison. St. Paul had seen Jesus Christ in the glory of the resurrection, and knew that no satisfaction which creation could afford was worthy of a moment's comparison with that great happiness.

24. *To remain in the body is necessary for you*, not for the Philippians only, but for the other Gentile Churches as well. The presence and encouragement of the Apostle was necessary to prepare the Churches for the severe trial that awaited

them at the outbreak of the great persecution, which occurred two or three years later, and which by depriving them of all their Apostles and Evangelists must have severely tried their faith.

25. *Trusting this*, leaving the decision of the question with perfect confidence in the hands of God, who will order it as he sees to be best, *I know* that I shall remain and continue with you all, for some considerable time. The word *I know* implies, however, no more than moral certainty, as appears from the language of the preceding verses, and from his words in ii. 17, *even if I should be sacrificed for your faith*, and 24, *I trust in the Lord to come to you quickly. For your profit*, or advancement in sanctity and merit, and *joy in the strengthening of your faith*, in the great privileges of the Gospel and hope of life everlasting.

26. *That your rejoicing or boasting may abound in Christ Jesus in me.* St. Chrysostom takes this actively, that I may be able to boast or rejoice in your spiritual advancement and the joy you derive from your faith in Jesus Christ, when I come among you. The words will, however, bear a more simple and literal interpretation. That your rejoicing in Christ may be increased *in me*, that is by my coming to you, my happy return to visit you once more, alive and well, in safety and in triumph.

27. Only live worthily of the Gospel of Christ, that whether when I come and see you, or absent hear of you, that you stand unanimous in one spirit, labouring together for the faith of the Gospel :

28. And that you are in nothing daunted by the adversaries: which to them is a cause of perdition, but to you of salvation, and this from God.

29. Because to you it is given for Christ, not only to believe in him, but also for him to suffer.

30. Having the same conflict, such as also you saw in me, and have now heard concerning me.

27. *Only live worthily of the Gospel of Christ.* The Greek word is *πολιτεύεσθε*, fill your place as citizens of the Church of God, worthily of the Gospel which is the charter of your incorporation. The figure is perhaps an allusion to the civic privileges enjoyed by the citizens of the Roman colony of Philippi. Either I shall come and visit you, and see with my own eyes, or if not, I shall hear of you by the report of others, and in either case I hope to find you standing in your ranks (another figure borrowed from the same source, for Philippi was a colony of soldiers) animated by one spirit and one soul, fighting side by side on behalf of the faith of the Gospel. The Vulgate has *collaborantes*, labouring together. The Greek word will bear either meaning. The grammatical construction of this sentence in the Vulgate is irregular. The Greek has: *that whether coming and seeing, or absent, I may hear.*

28. I hope also to find you, or hear of you, as in no degree terrified or daunted by the adversaries of your faith, who are endeavouring to stir up persecution against you. Because you are entitled to conclude, and infer with certainty, that their persecution of you is an undoubted *evidence* and *proof* (in the Greek) that they are under the condemnation of God; and that God is saving you. This divine condemnation of the enemies of the Church may be a reason for praying for them, that God may convert them; but it is also a powerful reason why you should not be afraid of them, or yield to them in the smallest degree. For *this is from God*, by his permission, for your trial, sanctification, increase of merit and salvation, and for the confusion and overthrow of the wicked, not only at the last day, but even in this world. For the stormy period of persecution came to an end at last, and was followed by a reaction, and when the government of the empire was peacefully settled, a few years later, under the rule of Vespasian, the Christian Church enjoyed a long interval of tranquillity and peace, and made astonishing and rapid progress in the conversion of the nations to the faith of Christ,

29. Meanwhile the sufferings you may have to endure are a special gift of God's grace, a special mark of his favour, *given you for Christ*. The two words *for Christ* in this sentence are either grammatically redundant : It is given you, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him. Or else the Apostle was going to write : *It is given you for Christ to suffer*, and he then interposes in the middle of the sentence, *not only to believe in him*.

30. And what you will have to undergo will be ill-treatment, injustice, violence, similar to that which you remember me to have met with when I first visited your city (Acts xvi. 22.) when with Silas I was stripped, beaten, and thrown into gaol. Or else like that which you hear I am at this moment undergoing in Rome, a prolonged imprisonment, not so dangerous or terrible as incarceration in a dungeon, but grievous and irksome. And either will be a *conflict* with the spiritual powers and human influences which will endeavour to deprive you of your faith.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Only the heart of Christ loves God worthily. By no other heart, no other affection, can he ever be loved, adored, worshipped, as he deserves. Because as he is infinite and incomprehensible, so also the love which he deserves, the adoration which is his due, the worship to which he is entitled, are all alike incomprehensible and infinite. Whatever adoration or love you give to God, as from yourself, is in his sight nothing. You yourself, and the whole created universe with you, are before him nothing and vanity. For you to love him is nothing, to adore him is nothing, to annihilate yourself in his presence is nothing. What is the value of reverence from nothing, what meaning is in the annihilation of nothing? But the love with which Christ loves God is infinite. The adoration he gives to God is infinite. The worship he renders God is infinite. If therefore you would offer to God anything

in any degree worthy of himself, or bearing any proportion to the greatness of his infinite perfection, you must have recourse to the heart of Christ. With that heart love God, with that adore God, with that worship God. Then you will love God worthily, adore him worthily, worship him worthily, for with God's heart you will love, adore, and worship God. For this was the Son of God given us as our mediator, that through him we may draw near to God, and worship God. For this has Christ become our Head and our Heart, that we, his members and his body, may through him worthily love God. Therefore in each and every act of religion have recourse to the heart of Christ, enter into the heart of Christ, make the heart of Christ your own, with that heart adore, and bless, and praise, and worship God. Join your own heart to the heart of Christ ; united to that heart offer to God the adoration of that heart, its love, and all its acts. And not less in the love of your neighbour also, use for your own the heart of Christ. Love him as Christ loves him. Long for his salvation with the longing of the heart of Christ ; and pray that he may love Christ, even as Christ loves him.



CHAPTER II.

1. If therefore there is any consolation in Christ, if any solace of charity, if any association of spirit, if any bowels of mercy;

2. Fulfil my joy, that you think alike, having the same charity, unanimous, united in sentiment,

3. Nothing through contention, nothing through vain glory: but in humility, considering one another as your superiors,

4. Not regarding each his own, but what is of others.

Ch. II. In this chapter the Apostle earnestly exhorts the Philippians to mutual charity, humility, and fear. He then proceeds to a warm commendation of St. Timothy and Epaphroditus, both of whom he was about to send to Philippi, though not at the same time.

1. *If therefore there is any consolation in Christ.* If you desire to convey to me any consolation and encouragement in Christ's name at this difficult crisis of my fortunes, when I am a prisoner, awaiting trial, doubtful of my life, expecting with natural anxiety and solicitude the task of pleading the cause of Christ in the presence of the emperor of the Romans;—if your charity prompts you to do what is in your power to support and aid me by your sympathy; if there exists between us a bond which unites and associates us in spirit, though parted in the body; if you are capable even of the human, ordinary, and instinctive feeling of compassion which urges all mankind to stretch out a helping hand to their fellow-men when they are in peril, perplexity, anxiety;—

2. I will show you what you can do, which will afford me deeper joy than anything else in your power. Let me know that you all are agreed in the maintenance of the one, holy, Catholic faith, such as I communicated it to you; that you are bound together by the bond of mutual charity; that you are united and unanimous in language and opinion, sentiment and feeling, as in faith and charity. St. Paul does not say, give me joy, but *fulfil my joy*. He had already great cause of rejoicing in the faith and charity of the Philippians, as he says in ch. i., in the extension of the Christian faith in Rome, in the fair and reasonable prospect of victory and success in the arduous controversy in which he was engaged. This joy would be made perfect and complete if the Philippians remained united with him, and among themselves, in perfect unanimity and charity. The solemnity and earnestness with which he introduces this request is suited to the nature of it; he asks nothing for himself, but only for concord among his friends, seeking the good of others, not his own.

3. Do nothing from rivalry, jealousy, the wish to excel or humiliate one another, or for the sake of the vain and empty glory of this world. And let everyone treat his neighbour, and consider him, as his *superior*, that is, in God's sight better than himself; a supposition which is, at least, in all cases probable.

4. And let each one seek *not only his own good*, but *also* that of his neighbour. All solicitude for one's own good is not wrong, but only that which is oblivious of, or injurious to, the welfare of others. In these suggestions the Apostle has noted four causes of discord, and four opposite causes of harmony and peace. The sources of disagreement are, 1, tenacity of opinion; 2, love of glory; 3, love of power; 4, undue solicitude for our own good. Opposed to these, as elements of concord and agreement, he places 1, humility of mind; 2, contempt of earthly glory; 3, love of dependence; 4, neglect of private interest. *United in sentiment; doing*

nothing for empty glory ; in humility considering others superior ; not regarding each his own. How far the Philippian Christians stood in need of these admonitions, we have no means of judging ; but this is what the Apostle asks of them as the greatest happiness they could confer upon him, and as what was still remaining to *complete his joy*. And he proceeds to enforce his lesson by the supreme Example of humility and of the reward with which God will crown it.

5. For let this feeling be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

6. Who though he was in form of God, not considering it rapine to be equal to God :

7. Yet emptied himself out, taking form of a slave, made into the likeness of men, and was found in habit as man.

8. He humbled himself, being made obedient even to death, and the death of the cross.

9. On which account also God exalted him, and gave him the name which is above every name ;

10. That in the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of celestial, terrestrial and infernal :

11. And every tongue confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.

5. *Let this feeling be in you.* He says *feeling*, not *intelligence*. No finite intelligence is capable of conceiving and comprehending the immensity of the humiliation of Deity which the Apostle describes in this wonderful passage, which has been selected by the Church, as is well known, for the Epistle at Mass on Palm Sunday. But though we cannot comprehend this humiliation, we are not altogether incapable of *feeling* it. St. Paul says *sentite*, not *intelligite*. *Christ Jesus was in the form of God*, that is, as all the Fathers understand it, *the nature of God*. This interpretation is especially and expressly insisted on by St. Chrysostom and St. Thomas. The writer who assumes the name of St. Ambrose understands *the form of God* to mean, not the nature of God, but the proof or

indication of it which Christ offered in his miracles, and he is followed in this interpretation by Grotius and Erasmus. But this is not the view taken by other ecclesiastical writers, and by the tradition of the Church, the true interpreter of the Apostolic writings, all of which authorities understand *the nature of God*. Being in the *nature* of God, Christ *thought it no robbery*, or undue assumption, to claim to be on an absolute equality with the Supreme Deity. The word *equal* is expressed adverbially in the Greek, τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ. Such a claim advanced by any merely created being would be a *rapine* or robbery inconceivably presumptuous and sacrilegious. (It was advanced by Simon Magus, a circumstance to which it is not impossible that the Apostle incidentally refers). It was attempted by Lucifer, when he said, *I will be like the Highest*, Is. xiv. 14. But Christ was guilty of no *rapine* when he said *I and my Father are one*, Joh. x. 30.

7. *Yet emptied himself out, semetipsum exinanivit*. Not that he laid aside his divine nature and infinite perfections, but concealed it under the veil of the creature, which he assumed. This must not be taken as implying that there was any voluntary and intentional concealment of his divine character in the conduct or language of Christ. There is not a word in the Gospels which favours such an idea, and on the contrary it was through his words, actions, gestures, and aspect, that his Divinity was revealed to his Apostles. He always spoke and acted, if the expression be allowable, in character, and as God. But only to faith and love could this be made manifest, and in the manger of Bethlehem, and in his daily life, he was to ordinary observers like other men. He *emptied himself out* by assuming a created and inferior nature. *Taking the form of a slave*, or servant, these two words not being distinguished either in the Greek or Latin. Taking, that is, the nature of man, the lowest order of intelligent and rational beings, capable of knowing God. He was *made into the likeness and habit of man*, in form, appearance, nature, aspect, reality of body and soul, like all other men, *true man*,

St. Thomas observes, on the word *exinanivit*: *Empty* is opposed to *full*. It is of Deity to be all fullness. Humanity and all that is created is merely dependent existence, and relatively nothing. Divinity includes all good; humanity is a *tabula rasa*, in a sense *empty*. Christ therefore *emptied himself out*; from full, became empty; from all, nothing; he hid from sight all his majesty, eternity, infinity, omnipotence, and became and was seen as an infant, a feeble and mortal man.

It is to be observed that exception might possibly be taken to the comprehensive nature of the precept given by the Apostle in verse 3, *let each consider every other his superior*. There are incontestably some differences of gifts, endowments, disposition, education, and the like, which make some men superior to others, and which are real, and not assumed. Are these not to be taken into account? And if they are, how can the injunction of St. Paul be carried out? This objection, which the Apostle had foreseen, falls to the ground, crushed and annihilated, in presence of the supreme example of humility which he here adduces. What is any earthly greatness, any limited superiority, in comparison with the greatness of him who was *equal with God*, and yet *emptied himself out*, fully and entirely, took the lowest place in his own rational creation, and was found *in habit as man* in the manger of the stable at Bethlehem? After this, any fancied superiority we may arrogate to ourselves becomes entirely worthless and insignificant, absolutely beneath regard. At last, St. Augustine says, let man blush to be proud, for whom God made himself humble. That pride is indeed incurable which the consideration of this humiliation will not cure.

8. *Being made obedient even unto death*. Having given the great Example of humility in the preceding words, the Apostle now adds the Example of charity. As in verse 3 he said, *Consider each one a superior*, so he had added in verse 4, *regarding not only your own, but what is of others*. Christ was for

the salvation of man *obedient* to the will of God ; *not as I will, but as Thou*, Matt. xxvi. 39. More than this, he condescended to be obedient also to man, into whose hands he surrendered himself, to be apprehended, tortured, condemned to death, and crucified ; and this for the salvation of the lost race of man. To this also is applicable the word used by the Apostle, *sentite*. The mind cannot grasp this extent of charity, nor the tongue express it, but the heart can feel, in a degree, how great charity it was which led Almighty God to obey, to suffer, and to die, for man. And to die *the death of the cross*, ordinarily reserved for criminals who were also slaves, or by their conduct had merited no better treatment. This was the completion of humiliation, the completion of obedience, and the completion of charity.

9. *On which account also God exalted him.* On account of his *obedience*, God exalted, in the Greek *superexalted*, raised him to the highest place in the universe, above all creation. The inference is that the highest advancement in the life to come will be assigned to those who have most closely imitated Christ in his humiliation, obedience, and charity. It is to be understood that Christ is *exalted* as man, and in his human nature, for in his Divine nature, in which he is equal to the Father from all eternity, he cannot be exalted. He is placed, *as man*, at the head of God's creation. *And gave him the name which is above every name.* That is, the name of God, in which he receives divine adoration from angels and men, being one Person, though existing in two natures. Mary's Son is God for ever. God conferred this *name* upon him by making known his Deity to the world, by the preaching of the Apostles. Some writers, however, not unreasonably suppose St. Paul to refer to the *name* of Jesus, or *the Saviour*. This term is constantly used in the Hebrew idiom to signify a king, leader, or prince, whose direction of public affairs renders a nation *safe* from attack or invasion from outside. They called upon the Lord, and he raised up to them *a saviour*, Jud. iii. 9. Thou didst give them *saviours*, 2 Esdr. ix. 27, &c.

Thus the *Saviour*, guardian, lord, and protector of all creation is *the name which is above every name*, because from him all other power and authority in heaven and earth is derived.

10. *At the name of Jesus every knee shall bend.* The *celestial*, the angels of heaven, the *terrestrial*, man on earth, the *infernal*, all the souls in the *limbus patrum*, in purgatory, even the fallen spirits in hell, however reluctantly, all rational and intelligent creatures in the universe, bend the knee to the Man whose name is Jesus, adore Jesus, acknowledge Jesus as their God and Lord. There is a reference to Is. xlv. 23, 24. *I have sworn by myself, the word of justice shall come out of my mouth and not return, that to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will swear.* This is in part fulfilled even now, and will be fully accomplished at the last day.

11. *Every tongue must confess.* The meaning of the next words in the Greek appears to be, *that Jesus Christ is Lord, in the glory of God the Father.* That he shares the same glory with God the Father, and is Lord of all creation, to all eternity. This will be finally accomplished at the great day when Christ will come *in the glory of his Father*, and attended by the holy Angels, Matt. xvi. 27.

The truth stated in this passage, that the attribute of *humility* is an integral and essential part of the nature of God, was entirely unknown to the pagan world, before the coming of Christ : nor indeed was it revealed even in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Even to the holy Angels it was not, until that time, made known in its full extent. The pride of Lucifer was shocked by the partial revelation of it. It is commonly thought that Satan refused to believe in the Incarnation of the Son of God, until convinced by the miracles of Christ. It must always remain, when reflected on, a cause of wonder and astonishment. Nevertheless some indication or confirmation of it may be gathered from the consideration of God's providence in the care of creation, which descends to the minutest particulars, and provides continually for the wants and necessities of the least and

humblest of his creatures. The *charity* and *humility* of God are commensurate, both far transcending any mental powers we possess to fathom or comprehend. Jesus Christ has given the proof and example equally of both; and by doing so earned and merited the inconceivable exaltation to which he is raised in glory, at the right hand of God. And of that divine glory you, Philippians, will also be partakers, if you will become imitators of the humility and charity of Christ.

12. Therefore, my beloved (as you always obeyed), not as in my presence only, but much more now in my absence, with fear and trembling operate your salvation.

13. For it is God who operates in you both to will and to accomplish according to the goodwill.

12. *Therefore*, inasmuch as it was the obedience of Christ which brought him to this height of glory in the heavens, and that glory you will be entitled to share, if you tread the same path by which he won it, there is every reason why you should continue in the obedience to the faith which you have hitherto observed, from the hour of your conversion. And this you should do, not for man's sake, or to please me, but to please God, who dwells among you always, though I am absent, and sees both what you do, and the motives from which your actions spring. And as my withdrawal removes one reason and motive for this obedience, this is itself a reason why you should pursue this course *much more* in my absence, that is with greater resolution and courage, for fear the deprivation of my presence should make you negligent or desponding.

With fear and trembling operate your salvation. St. Chrysostom observes that the Apostle does not say ἐργάζεσθε, operate, but κατεργάζεσθε, insist on finishing or completing it. God has *operated* your salvation, so far as it rests with him; your co-operation is requisite to complete the work he has begun. This the Apostle explains more fully in the next verse.

13. *It is God who operates in you, both to will and to accomplish.* This is a motive, 1, for energy and activity; *operate your salvation*; 2, for humility; *with fear and trembling*. The will, and the power to work, both come from God. There is no room for pride; neither is there excuse for neglect. St. Bernard observes, at the end of his book *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, that God operates in us to think, to will, and to perform. The first without us; the second with us; the third through us. The suggestion of faith and obedience comes from him, without any consent on our part, but the *will*, also from his grace, requires the co-operation of our will. The performance comes also from God's grace, but cannot take place except through and by means of us. Grace operates with free will, so as in the first instance only to prevent and come before it, in the other two accompanying it; for this very purpose *preventing* the will, that the will may thereafter co-operate with it. *With fear and trembling*, because grace comes from God's pure mercy; with energy and activity, because your co-operation is required to bring it to good effect.

14. And do all things without murmurings and hesitations.

15. That you may blameless and guileless, sons of God, without reprehension, in the midst of a wicked and perverse nation; among whom you shine as luminaries in the world.

16. Holding the word of life, to my glory in the day of Christ, because I have not run in vain nor laboured in vain.

14. *Without murmurings and hesitations.* Obey the will of God, when clearly manifested, without complaining of the hardship to which it may temporarily expose you, without discussion, questioning, or cavilling. Such cavilling is not a mode of obedience, but an excuse for disobedience. *That you may be blameless.* The Greek has *unblamed*; the Syriac, *perfect*; Ambrose, *incapable of blame*, that is, such that no one can reasonably complain of you. *Guileless*, or simple, means

candid and straightforward, placing upon every proceeding of others the best interpretation, giving fair, just, and respectful consideration to the rights and claims of other men. These terms, *blameless* and *guileless*, are not joined to *sons of God*, in the Greek construction of the sentence, which joins *sons of God* to the epithet which follows, *without reprehension*, faultless and immaculate children of God. Leading a blameless life, as suits God's sons and daughters; an injunction intended doubtless for the secular life. *In the midst of a wicked and perverse nation*. In the Greek, *a generation tortuous and perverted*. Turned aside from God's commands, and inventing all sorts of subtle and elaborate systems of philosophy to excuse and justify their treason, loving error and stubborn in wrong.

Among whom you shine as luminaries in the world. This is what Christ said to his disciples, *Let your light shine before men*. The Christian is a star in heaven, guiding wanderers on earth; a beacon light showing the harbour of salvation to the navigators in danger of being wrecked on the shoals of life. But the star that has ceased to shine is lost in the blackness of the dark, and the watch light, if extinguished, will cause the wreck of many a gallant ship. In the Greek text the word *shine* may be understood either in the indicative or imperative, and in this last sense it is taken by the Syriac version, which gives the whole passage thus: Be perfect, be spotless and blameless, as pure sons of God, who dwell in the midst of a rough and tortuous generation, and among these appear and let yourselves be seen as the luminaries of the world.

16. *Holding the word of life*. Preserving or retaining it. Or else, holding it on high, as the lighthouse holds its lamp, the rays of which gleam over many miles of land and sea. More probably still, the Apostle means, as the sun, moon, and stars give light, warmth, or vegetative life to plants and animals, so illuminate, warm, attract, all around you, with the life-

giving light of faith. For the *word of life* is what St. Paul said to the gaoler at Philippi, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved, and thy household.

To my glory in the day of Christ. That I may rejoice at the last day, in the conversion of the people of Macedonia to the faith of Jesus Christ, the fruit of my preaching his Gospel among you. Only at the last day the Apostle looks to any enjoyment of the fruit of his labours. Always he desired that fruit, and prayed and laboured for its abundance; but his own share was reserved for heaven. This life is the time for labour and sowing the seed; the harvest and reward must come hereafter. Then it will be shown that I have not run *in vacuum*, without a mark to aim at, and to direct my course; that I have not laboured *in vacuum*, for a faith that is only illusion, or a hope that disappoints.

17. But even if I am immolated upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

18. And for this very thing also do you joy and rejoice with me.

If the people of Macedonia are by my means, and yours, converted to the faith of Jesus Christ, it matters very little in comparison what becomes of me. Rather, my martyrdom will be a subject of mutual congratulation and rejoicing, both to myself and you.

If I am immolated. The Greek has, *If I am poured out*, that is, if my blood is poured out as a libation or drink offering. The pagan sacrifices, as well as those of the Hebrews, consisted of two things: first, the victim, a bull, calf, ram, or the like; and the vegetable offering of meal and wine, which was always presented with it. This offering of the fruits of the earth was possibly derived from the worship of our first parents in the garden of Eden, and was an acknowledgment that all good gifts come from God. The victim was added at the fall and expulsion from Paradise, as a confession of

sin. Cain's offering of fruit was not accepted, because he brought no victim, and consequently made no confession of sin. The holy sacrifice of the Mass retains the *mincha*, as it was called in Hebrew, the offering of bread, and the Victim is Jesus Christ, offered for the sins of the world. In the Hebrew and pagan sacrifices the wine was poured over the victim on the altar, or at the foot of the altar. In the figure used by St. Paul in the text, he regards the Philippians as the victim which he offered to God by the preaching of the Gospel. His own blood, shed for Christ's cause and theirs, was the libation, poured *upon the sacrifice*. He adds, *obsequium*, the *liturgy*, or service, *of your faith*. Preaching the Gospel is a kind of *liturgy*, or sacrifice. The hearers are the victims. the preacher is the priest, preparing them for sacrifice. The Holy Spirit is the fire of charity by which the victims are consumed. The same figure occurs in Rom. xv. 16. As if he said: I have offered you in sacrifice to God, by your conversion to the faith. And if to this sacrifice my blood is added as a libation, I shall thereat rejoice with you, and you will in turn rejoice with me.

19. But I hope in the Lord Jesus that I shall shortly send Timothy to you, that I also may take courage, knowing how you stand,

20. For I have no one so much in agreement with me, who is solicitous for you with sincere affection,

21. For all seek what is their own, not what is of Jesus Christ.

22. But you are to know him by experience, that as a son to a father, he has served with me in the Gospel.

23. I hope therefore to send him to you soon, when I have seen how my affairs turn out.

24. But I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall come to you soon.

19. *I hope in the Lord Jesus, by the help of his aid and*

providence, who is the supreme, though unseen, ruler of the Church and of all the world, *shortly to send Timotheus to you*, to bring me his account of your welfare. This was a return for the courtesy of the Philippians, who had sent Epaphroditus to Rome to enquire about St. Paul. He proceeds to give St. Timothy the double recommendation that he was more than anyone else then at Rome in concord with the feelings, sentiments, and views of the Apostle, whom he had aided in his Apostolic labours, like a son with a father; and that he had a sincere regard and affection for the Christians of Philippi, and was most anxious to promote their welfare. The words *know him by experience* are in the imperative in the Vulgate. The Greek will bear this sense, or that of the indicative, *you already know him by experiment*, or trial. The Apostle adds that most of his companions in Rome seemed to seek principally their own glory and distinction, rather than to promote the glory of Jesus Christ. They were perhaps the same whom he referred to above, as proclaiming the faith of Christ from contention and love of vain glory, rather than of sincerity and real love of Christ. God may make use of such persons to promote his cause, but they are always liable to break down, as in the present case, under *experiment*, or any unusual trial of their sincerity and zeal, demanding some sacrifice of their temporal interest or comfort.

25. But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and co-operator, and fellow-soldier, and your Apostle, and the minister of my necessity;

26. For indeed he is most desirous to see you, and has been grieved because you heard he was ill.

27. For he was indeed sick unto death: but God had compassion on him; and not on him only, but also on me, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28. I send him therefore as soon as possible, that when you have seen him, you may be glad once more, and I may be free from sorrow.

29. Receive him therefore with all joy in the Lord, and hold such in honour ;

30. Because for the work of Christ he drew near to death, delivering up his life, to fulfil that which was wanting on your part, to serve me.

24. It is not known whether St. Paul was ever able to fulfil the hope expressed in this verse, that he would visit the Philippians again. We have no authentic record of his proceedings after his liberation, for about three years, when we find him once more in chains at Rome, on the outbreak of the great persecution, and then he only left his prison to go to his death. From such indications as exist, it seems probable that he spent the intervening period in western lands, not in the east.

25. *I think it necessary*, without waiting for the chance of my own coming, or the opportunity of sending Timotheus, *to send to you* at once Epaphroditus, with this letter. He styles this holy man *the Apostle* of the Philippians, because he was their Bishop, according to Theodoret ; or because he was their legate or nuncio to St. Paul, as Theophylact thinks. St. Chrysostom calls him the Doctor of the Philippians. St. Paul describes him further as his brother, fellow-labourer, fellow-soldier, the supplier of his wants and necessities, and support and aid in the troubles and difficulties arising out of his imprisonment. Every Bishop is the brother of the Apostles in faith, their collaborator in their ministry, their comrade in their sacred warfare, an Apostle in his own diocese, to the poor and afflicted an administrator, father, and protector.

26. It was an additional reason for sending Epaphroditus at once, that he had recovered from a dangerous illness

which had brought him, when at Rome, to the brink of the grave. Communication was less easy and frequent in those days than at present, and he had suffered greatly from anxiety on account of his friends at Philippi, who might possibly suppose that he was dead, and was most anxious therefore to see them again. When you have seen him, the Apostle adds, *I shall be free from sorrow*. The Greek has, that I may be *less* grieved, or sad; and the Syriac, that the burden of sorrow in my soul may be lightened. From sorrow and anxiety St. Paul was never wholly free, but it was capable of being alleviated and consoled, as arising from causes which at no very distant day would wholly cease to afflict or trouble him.

29. *Receive him with joy in the Lord*. The Greek and Syriac read, *receive him in the Lord with joy*. And *hold such in honour*, who for the sake of serving Christ, aiding his ministers, promoting the spread of his kingdom, surrender their lives, in the Greek *disregard* their lives, and face death for Christ's sake. For Epaphroditus had risked his life, and nearly lost it, by coming to Rome to give St. Paul the aid and support of his presence, his personal service and exertions, and his purse, in fulfilment of the mission he had undertaken on behalf, and at the request, of the Christians at Philippi.

The words in verse 25 *I think it necessary* to send Epaphroditus, are in the past tense, both in the Vulgate and in the Greek, *I thought it*, by an idiom frequent at that period, and often occurring in the letters of Cicero. The writer puts himself in the place of the receiver of the letter. *I think*, that is, *I thought* when I was writing.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Hold such in honour. The man who boldly faces death for the glory of Jesus Christ, is worthy of respect and gratitude

and honour. Not only the Apostles, who laid down their lives, as they spent them, for the testimony of Jesus Christ ; the great army of martyrs who encountered, unflinchingly and joyfully, the fire, the knife, every form of torture which ingenuity could devise, under the execution of the cruel and impious edicts of a Nero, a Domitian, or a Dioclesian, in ancient days ; or the Theban Legion who were massacred to a man, without resistance, rather than deny their faith : these are not the only followers of Christ who have *despised their lives* for his sake. How many brave and devoted priests there are, in our own days, who go forth into distant lands, to carry the Gospel of Christ and the light of faith among idolaters and infidels, pledged to die in the discharge of the sacred duties to which God's voice has called them, and in the lands where they are sent ! Under the torrid skies of Africa, amid the snowy solitudes of Northern America, through the unexplored forests of the tropics, among the cruel barbarians of Corea, are men who for Christ's sake *despise their lives*, and having long since given up home, friends, ambition, comfort, every other earthly object, for the only reward that has any attraction for them, are ready and willing, eager and desirous, to crown the sacrifice by the surrender of life itself. Any man who, by one brave and unselfish deed of daring, risks his life to save others, from fire, or from drowning at sea, or from infection, or the like, is by the common consent of mankind *held in honour*, praised and respected for a self-sacrificing and generous deed. Much more is he worthy of honour who for the salvation of the immortal souls of men for whom Christ died, gives up all that makes life to other men desirable, and daily for years together faces and braves in this cause peril, suffering, and death. It is of such that Christ said, *you are the salt of the earth*. For they testify in the sight of all men that there is an object and an aim in human life higher and more noble than any which is bounded by the grave ; and that the things of time and sense upon which mankind are so liable, in their

blindness and inconsideration, to be led to set their hearts, are insignificant and contemptible in comparison with that eternal crown of glory, which will never fade, which God has prepared for those who are ready to surrender all, even life, dare all, even death, in his service and for his glory.



CHAPTER III.

1. For the rest, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, is not indeed troublesome to me, and is necessary for you.

Ch. III. In this chapter the Apostle earnestly and emphatically warns the Christians of Philippi against the teachers of heresy, whose hypocrisy and wickedness he denounces in language of extraordinary vehemence and strength.

1. *For the rest, rejoice in the Lord.* The first part of this verse refers to what has gone before, the second to what follows. You have nothing to trouble you, nothing to make you solicitous, nothing to fear. My imprisonment is no hindrance to the cause of the Gospel of Christ, but rather tends to advance it. Epaphroditus has returned to you safe. Timotheus will shortly come. I hope eventually to come myself. Rejoice therefore and be filled with spiritual joy and gratitude to Christ, who has relieved your anxieties and fears.

Then he adds: It is no trouble or annoyance to me to keep writing and saying the same things to you, which I have often said to you before, and written, if not to you, at least to other Churches. I used to tell you *often* (v. 18) when I was with you, to beware of the heretical teachers who are, while professing the Christian name, in reality the worst enemies of the cross of Christ. To this subject I have often to refer, in every Epistle I write, in almost every address I deliver. It is not troublesome to me to do so, *because* I know

how necessary (the Greek has *safe*) it is for you to give you this warning. The Syriac reads: It does not weary me, because it puts you on your guard. It is evident that this was the great controversy of the day, and the great danger of the times, and that the craft, subtlety, plausibility, philosophical language, and mask of piety, adopted by heretics, made the peril of seduction very great. The light in which the Apostle regarded them is forcibly shown in the next words.

2. Look to the dogs, look to the false workers, look to the cutting.

3. For we are the circumcision who serve God in the spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and not in the flesh have confidence.

2. *Look to the dogs.* The Greek has βλέπετε, beware of, but the Vulgate renders this word literally, *videte*. *Dogs*, says Theodoret, was of old a names of the Gentiles. *It is not good to take the bread of the sons and throw it to the dogs*, Matt. xv. 26. But things are now changed, and names with things, and the Gentiles are now the sons, and the Jews the dogs. The *dogs* are the judaizers, who barked at, bit, and tore the preachers of the word of God. They were *evil*, false, or cheating workmen, who helped to destroy and pull down the temple of God, instead of building it up. *The cutting*, κατατομή, *concisio*, is a contemptuous term for the rite of circumcision, the necessity of which these teachers continued to inculcate and insist on. But it appears from what follows that under the mask of Judaism they concealed the philosophical errors of the sect of Simon Magus, and insisted on circumcision chiefly because the adoption of this rite would sever from the communion of the Apostles those who were persuaded to take this step. In the vision of the holy Catholic Church, under the figure of the new Jerusalem, granted to St. John the Divine, probably during the persecution under Nero,

he says, Apoc. xxi. 15 : Outside are *the dogs*, and the sorcerers, and the impure, and the homicides, and the servers of idols, and every one who loves falsehood and does it ; evidently implying that these sectaries were at that time cast out of the communion of the Church.

3. *For we are the circumcision.* There is no analogy between the rite of circumcision and the sacrament of Baptism. On the contrary, proselytes from paganism, if they became Jews, received both, being first baptised with water to signify their adoption into the family of Abraham, after which, being now considered children of Abraham, they received the seal of the covenant. Baptism is our adoption into the family of Christ. What circumcision signified was the withdrawal of the heart and affections from the pleasures and ambitions of this mortal life, and fixing them on the hope of the enjoyment of God in eternity. This is what the Apostle expresses in this place. *We are the circumcision, who serve God in the spirit*, that is in the spirit of charity and obedience, sincerely believing in him, firmly hoping in him, loving God, and loving our neighbours for his sake, observing God's commands for love of him, and referring all things to his glory. *And glory in Jesus Christ*, make it our only rejoicing and boast that we are Christians, and glory in Christ as the author of our salvation. *And have no confidence in the flesh.* Do not work for salvation from any antecedent merits of our own, independently of the grace of God, given us through faith in Christ ; but in that grace and mercy alone. Saint Paul goes on to explain that he also is of the number of those who, in this sense, had no confidence in the flesh, though of all men living he was most entitled to such confidence, were any reliance or trust to be reposed on it with safety.

4. Although I have confidence even in the flesh. If any other seems to confide in the flesh, I more.

5. Circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, according to law a Pharisee,

6. According to zeal, persecuting the Church of God, according to the justice which is in the law, living without blame.

4. *I have confidence even in the flesh.* The argument is that if the advantages which the Apostle here enumerates had been sufficient to save or satisfy the soul of man, they would have done so in his case. But there is also a reference by contrast to the claims of his opponents. Simon Magus was not a Jew, but a Samaritan of the mixed race of Israelites and Babylonians, originating in the Babylonian colony settled at Samaria by Asor-Hadan, or Asenaphar, king of Assyria, in B.C. 678, 1 Esdr. iv. 2, 10, 4 Reg. xvii. 24. 30. It is probable that most of the heretic teachers were not, like St. Paul, *circumcised on the eighth day*, like Isaac, but received the rite later and expressly out of opposition to the teaching of the Apostles. And it is very likely they were not all of them of the *race of Israel* at all. The *tribe of Benjamin* from which St. Paul sprang, were descended from the best-loved son of the patriarch Israel, or Jacob, and this tribe adhered to the Jews in the division of the kingdoms of Juda and Israel. From the tribe of Benjamin was descended king Saul, after whom the Apostle was named, and from whom he was very probably descended. The *Hebrews* included all the descendants of the great Semitic patriarch Heber, Gen. x. 21, and the title distinguished them from the Babylonians and the Greeks; but St. Chrysostom thinks that by the expression *a Hebrew of the Hebrews* the Apostle means to refer to his well known familiarity with the Hebrew language. All these prerogatives, so far, were shared by many others, and hereditary; the three which follow were peculiar to himself, or dependent on his own will and choice. My *zeal* for my race and traditions, religion and nationality, was absorbing, and led me

to persecute *the Church of God*, to fly in the face of God himself. I observed the law as interpreted by the Pharisees, the strictest of the sects ; and so carefully and exactly that no fault could be found with me. On the score of *legal justice*, I was blameless.

7. But the things which were gain to me, these I judged to be loss on account of Christ.

8. And indeed I consider all things loss on account of the eminent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord : for whose sake I have made all things loss, and consider them as refuse, that I may gain Christ,

9. And he found in him, not having my justice which is of the law, but that which is of faith of Christ Jesus ; which is from God, justice in faith.

10. To know him, and the virtue of his resurrection, and the association with his sufferings ; being made like his death :

11. If in any way I may arrive at the resurrection which is from the dead.

7. *The things which were gain to me*, all these privileges of Jewish religion and nationality, on which I once set so high a value, appeared to me, not only worthless, contemptible, and insignificant, as soon as I knew Jesus Christ, but actually *loss* and injury, as keeping me away from him, and from the faith which was to unite me with him. And not these things only, but *all things* which this world contains or offers, its wealth, distinction, even life itself, appeared to me worse than worthless, positive evils which it were desirable to be rid of, compared with the *eminent knowledge*, in the Greek the *excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*. And to attain this knowledge I have, in actual fact, *made all things loss*, or lost all things, thrown away all advantages, prospects, privileges in present enjoyment, dreams of ambition for the future—and the worldly prospects of St.

Paul were of a singularly brilliant kind, as will be evident to any reader of the Acts of the Apostles, and his change of faith so disappointed and embittered his fellow-countrymen that they sought his life, with the utmost resolution and pertinacity, for years together—and counted them as merely *refuse*. The Greek word σκύβαλα is said to be derived from ἐς κύνας βαλεῖν, food which is only good to be thrown to dogs. The Vulgate has *stercora*, dung or filth, which is worse than refuse, for it defiles and pollutes, occasions sickening and disgust. But the Greek writers, Photius and Theodoret, understand by this word *straw*, and think the Apostle is referring to the Judaic law, which became useless and was thrown aside, when Christ, the grain which it produced, was threshed out of it. Photius says: The stalk and blade are necessary, until the wheat is formed in it, and taken from it, and as long as Christ, the real grain of wheat, was not yet born, and still lay concealed in the husk, the law had its use. But when, through his passion and resurrection, the grain was gathered, and by his ascension on high, laid up in his heavenly Father's granary, the stalk was henceforth useless, except to be trodden into straw. St. Chrysostom admits this interpretation as possible, but thinks it more probable that the Apostle is speaking, not of the law, but of earthly riches, power, influence, and similar advantages, which, compared to the knowledge of Christ, are vain, unsatisfying, valueless, and useless, and not *goods* in any real sense whatever. *That I may gain Christ.* To gain Christ is to gain his grace, his justice, the participation of his merits in this life, the enjoyment of his presence in eternity. To gain this also, in measure, in this life, by communion with him and confidence in his care and love.

9. *And be found in him*, exist or find myself in him, belonging to him as a member of the body of which he is the head. Or else, *be found in him* at the judgment of the last day. *Not having my justice*, or more literally, *justice of my own*, that which proceeds from knowledge and observance of the law,

without the spirit of faith and grace; *but* having the *justice which comes through faith of Christ*. The name *Jesus* is here omitted in the Greek, but inserted in the Vulgate. The *justice* which begins with justification or remission of sins, and proceeds to the sanctification of soul and body through the grace of the Holy Spirit. This is the only *justice* which can avail for salvation, because it is the justice which comes from God, and proceeds from the grace of God, *in faith*, or as the Greek text has it, *upon faith*, built upon the foundation of faith in Christ. The justice of the law, the justice of the Pharisees, was human and external only, founded exclusively in works and obedience within the compass of the natural powers of man and subject to human observation. This can justify only politically, and in the sight of man, not in the sight of God. Such exterior justice as this, St. Paul calls *justice of my own*, because it proceeds from merely human choice, power, or resolution. It is not Christian justice, for the law is observed neither in the spirit of Christ, or by faith in Christ.

10. *To know him, and the virtue of his resurrection*. These words are joined by St. Chrysostom and Theodoret to those which immediately precede. The justice of God proceeds from the faith by which Christ is known, and the power of his resurrection understood, and a share in his sufferings communicated to the believer. But they are more conveniently understood as the continuation of what was said in verse 8. I count all earthly things as valueless and worse, *for the knowledge of Christ, to be found in him, and to know him*. To *know* who he is, how great he is, what he is like. That he is God and man, the only Saviour of the world. This speculatively. Practically, to *know* him, as the soul of one man knows the soul of another, as a child knows its parents, as friend knows friend, by personal acquaintance and interchange of thought and sentiment. This knowledge does not, however, necessarily lead to salvation, for there must be a corresponding disposition or goodwill in the receiver. Judas

knew Christ intimately, and did not love him. Evil spirits said, *We know who thou art, the Holy of God.* Another said, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know,* Act. xix. 15. To Saint Paul, this knowledge appeared the only object which made existence worth having. But he was not satisfied with such knowledge of Christ as the Apostles possessed during his mortal life. He had seen him, for a moment, in the glory of the life of the resurrection, and the desire of his heart was to penetrate the mystery of that immortal life in which Christ lives for ever, and learn the secret of its undying strength, undecaying energy, unceasing vigour, indescribable beauty, gladness, and splendour. *To know him, and the power of his resurrection.* But in the nature of that life itself, there was something that showed that it was only attained through suffering, and suffering of which only the perfect nature of Christ was capable. This suffering, therefore, the Apostle earnestly desired to share, so far as imperfect mortality could share it. *Being made like his death.* Conformed or *configured* to his death; my own life a representation or acting over again the suffering and death of Christ. The suffering and death of Christ turned into, or developed into, the joy of the resurrection, as night turns to morning, and all sorrow, generously borne, will turn to joy. All suffering which was like the suffering of Christ, the Apostle was willing, and much more than willing, to encounter, if by such means, and that he saw to be in the nature of things, and by God's economy the only means, he could attain to that glorious state and condition in which Christ had appeared to him. *If by any means I can arrive at the resurrection from the dead.* And the glory of that vision, and the attractions of that thought, so filled his imagination and overwhelmed his heart, that compared with it all the riches of the world, all the renown and fame of its greatest men, the splendour of all the kingdoms of the earth, appeared of no more value in his sight than the glimmer of the rushlight in the blaze of the noon-day sun.

The expression *if in any way* appears to indicate some

uncertainty and some difficulty. In 1 Cor. ix. 27 St. Paul expresses the fear that after having preached to others, he may himself be reprobate. Yet St. Paul, on the testimony of Christ himself, was *a vessel of election*, Act ix. 15. The inference is, in opposition to the doctrine of Calvin, that God's election does not make the final attainment of the glory of the resurrection a matter of absolute certainty. The Greek word here used for resurrection is *ἐξανάστασις*, a resurrection complete and final, glorious and heavenly, to be followed by no decay or death. To this great end we are conducted through two means, faith in Christ, and conformity with his sufferings. The first renders us fervent in affection, and raises us already, in desire and hope. The second will endow us with the merits of Christ, and render us worthy of our glorious destiny. These are the two wings on which we are to rise from earth to heaven.

12. Not that already I have received, or am already made perfect : but I follow if by any means I may lay hold of that in which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13. Brethren, I consider not myself to have laid hold : but one thing, forgetting what is indeed behind, but stretching myself out to those things which are before,

14. I follow on to the destined end, to the prize of the calling of God that is above, in Christ Jesus.

12. *Not that already I have received* the prize at which I aim, or reached the goal to which my course is directed. But Christ, when he appeared to me on the road to Damascus, took me as it were by the hand and placed me on the course, with that prize full in view, and all my efforts and exertions ever since are directed to attain and lay hold of it. He caught me in his net, says Theodoret, I was a fugitive, and he seized me. Now I follow him, striving to lay hold on him, lest I fall away from his salvation.

Neither am I already made perfect. This verse probably

refers to another error of the heretics which the Apostle more distinctly formulates in 2 Tim. ii. 18. Hymenæus and Philetus asserted that *the resurrection is past already*, and no further change is to be looked for, the saints of God being *already made perfect*. Some of the Christians of Philippi may have been puzzled by this opinion, especially if it was advanced cautiously and tentatively, and with less confidence than was displayed by Hymenæus and Philetus seven years later, and the Apostle here expressly contradicts it.

13. I do not regard myself as having already laid hold on the reward of eternal life. *One thing* absorbs all my energies, faculties, endeavours. I do not regard, or recall, or regret what I have surrendered and sacrificed for Christ. I do not dwell on what I have already done or suffered for His sake. But I *stretch* out my hands, and use my feet, extend my hopes and desires, labour, suffer, and serve God, for *that which is before me*. This was the crown of martyrdom, the great object of his ambition and longing.

14. I press onward to the mark, *destination*, the prize of life eternal at the resurrection from the dead, the call from heaven to rise to heaven. The call is from God, the answer on my part is my faith in Christ.

15. Whoever therefore of us are perfect, let us think this; and if in any degree you think otherwise, this also God will reveal to you.

16. Meanwhile, as far as we have proceeded, let us think the same, and remain in the same rule.

15. *Whoever of us are perfect*. Whoever among you either claim to be perfect already, or are desirous of attaining perfection—this term is apparently borrowed from the language of the heretics who claimed *perfection* for the adepts in their mystical philosophy—let each agree with me, and hold the same view I do; namely, that we have *not* as yet attained perfection. The perfect man, says St. Chrysostom,

does not consider himself perfect ; and in this consists his perfection. This does not involve any contradiction, for though he may be perfect in comparison with others, yet he is in many respects incomplete and wanting in himself, and in the sight of God.

If in any way you think differently. This is expressed with extraordinary moderation and gentleness. The opinion the Apostle is impugning was undoubtedly heresy, and if they held it, they must have been deceived. Yet he puts it down to ignorance and defective information, rather than to any malice or evil intent. If you do not see this, God will in time reveal it to you. Meanwhile let us all, in whatever degree we have made progress towards perfection, adhere to the teaching of the Church, and hold the same holy faith ; and adopt and practice the same rule of life, as regards obedience to the commands of God and the precepts of the Church. On these two points there can be no variation, and no exception. A *rule*, St. Chrysostom observes, admits neither of addition or abstraction, or else it is not a *rule*.

17. Be imitators of me, brethren, and observe those who so walk as you have our form.

18. For many walk, who I have often told you, and now also tell you weeping, are enemies of the cross of Christ,

19. Whose end is death, whose God is their stomach, and their glory in their own confusion, who think of the things of earth.

17. *Be imitators of me.* The Greek has, be imitators together, or by common consent, of me, and observe those who so walk, as you have a type in us. It is to be explained that the Apostle says, *imitate me*, rather than *imitate Christ*, because there were ostensibly two types or standards of what was called the Christian life, one set by the Apostles, the other by the heretics, who systematically lived in sin, and seriously maintained that this was serving Christ. These

were the *dogs* referred to in verse 2. He said there, *observe the dogs*, to avoid them ; here he says, *observe those who walk as we do*, to follow and imitate them. This is further stated in the next verse. The Apostles, St. Chrysostom says, were a type and exemplar of holy living. So should every prelate be. Yet the faults of the prelate do not excuse the subjects, because Christ said *Learn of me*. And we have in the Scriptures the examples of all virtues.

18. *Many walk*, who though they profess to preach the cross of Christ, are not to be imitated in their lives. I often told you of them when I was with you, and now I mention them again with tears. Those who live in pleasure, says St. Chrysostom, are truly to be wept for. The same Father adds these remarks : They are enemies of the cross of Christ, first, because they attributed justification to the law and not to grace, the fruit of the cross. Secondly, because while they made a profession of Christian faith, they lived in ease and pleasure, which is in direct opposition to the cross. Nothing is so unlike a Christian as to seek for rest and ease. Thy Lord was led to his cross, and thou seekest rest. Thy Lord was pierced with nails, and thou indulgest in pleasures ! Is this like a generous soldier ? If thou lovest thy lord, live his life, and die his death, crucify thyself, not so as to die, but so as to say with Paul, *To me the world is crucified*.

19. *Whose end is death*. The end to which their steps are directed, at which they must arrive if they pursue the course on which they have entered, is ruin, destruction, death eternal. *Whose God is their stomach*. Who have in reality no higher object in their religious teaching than to secure their own maintenance and support, and live upon the credulity of their disciples. Their boast and glory is everything of which they ought to be ashamed. And their care and pride is exclusively for what belongs to this world, nor do they, in truth and reality, sincerely believe in any other. It is not improbable, from the phrase used in the next verse, that the persons to whom the Apostle refers were Roman citizens.

and prided themselves on that distinction, which St. Paul also possessed, as well as the citizens of Philippi.

20. But our conversation is in the heavens: whence also we look for a Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.

21. Who will reform the body of our humility, made to resemble the body of his splendour, according to the operation by which he is also able to subject to himself all things.

20. *Our conversation is in the heavens.* In the Greek, *our city* stands, and is even now existing, in the heavens, *πολίτευμα* our civic municipality or incorporation. The Syriac, our military constitution, as an army. The Ethiopic, our state, city, or republic. Tertullian, our municipality. In heaven is our home and refuge, our safety and protection, our friends and comrades, our rights and freedom. We are citizens of heaven, and live under the laws and government of a celestial kingdom. And from heaven we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, who will come at the last day, not as our judge or enemy, but our *Saviour*, and set us, his friends, free for ever from care or sorrow of mind or body, clothe soul and body with eternal splendour and glory.

21. For he will *reform*, in the Greek transfigure or transform, turn into another form as regards its accidents, rendering it no longer subject to suffering or corruption, but impassible, incorruptible, and eternal, *the body of our humility*, a Hebraism for our lowly, abject, miserable body, bringing it to the likeness of his our most glorious body, *the body of his splendour, or glory*, in and through which his glory is made manifest. And this change he will effect by the exertion of the almighty power he possesses, by which all material things are subject to his will.

The heretics believed that the human body will perish for ever in the grave, and only the immaterial nature survive for eternity; and further, that all material existence being

essentially impure, the body is in itself vile and unholy, so our treatment of it does not affect the spirit, and becomes therefore insignificant. In opposition to these dreadful errors, the Apostle maintains, in these concluding verses, 1. That there is a material existence prepared for us in the heavens; 2, that Christ dwells materially in the heavens, exalted in glory at the right hand of God; 3, that his body is glorious and beautiful beyond imagination or description; 4, that our own will be transfigured into the same splendid image at the last great day; 5, that his empire extends over the material world, which, according to his good pleasure and imperial will, is destined to share his eternity.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

All earthly goods are loss, not gain, and for the most part, do us no real good, but only harm. This is explained more fully by Saint Chrysostom, in his tenth homily, upon this chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, moral. pp. 99, 100. First, he says that the good things of this life, as they are commonly called and considered, are in reality loss, not gain; because the acquisition of them, and even the care, possession, and enjoyment of them when acquired, involve a great deal of trouble, and no real profit. King Solomon pointed this out, when he said, Eccles. v. 10, Where there are great riches there are also many to eat them, and what doth it profit the owner, but that he seeth the riches with his eyes? And that, another can do equally well, or better. The richest man really derives no advantages from his wealth, except food and clothing, which he shares with all whom he employs; and an immensity of labour, care, and trouble, from which the rest are free. Secondly the possession of riches appears almost to upset the reason. Ladies, and the steeds which draw their carriages, are caparisoned very much alike. Their adornments are much the same, constructed of the same materials, glowing with the same rich

colours. In what respect does all this benefit the creature endowed with intelligence, more than the creature which is deprived of it? Thirdly, riches are useless to avert any of the real evils of life. They cannot buy off death, they cannot defend us from disease, they cannot save us from the decay and debility incidental to old age.

Yet the same great writer adds, that there is nothing good which God has made, and which he bestows upon us, which we cannot turn into real gain, instead of loss, by converting it to the service of the Giver. God has given you eyesight. Render it back to him, by considering his works, and glorifying him for their beauty, excellence, and perfection. He has given you your hands, he has, perhaps, given you money. All these, and other gifts, you can, if you will, by deeds of piety and charity, devote to his service. Then, and only then, will they be of advantage to you. Neither riches nor poverty, in themselves, conduct to hell or heaven, but the dispositions with which they are received, and the use to which they are put. If these are rightly directed, duly moderated, made such as God intends and desires them to be, riches or poverty alike, whichever he sends you, will become to you gain, not loss. A woodman can cut down a tree, and cut it up into logs of wood, with an axe of iron, or with an axe of gold; and Christian graces may be acquired and cultivated by poverty, or by riches. But they are more easily acquired, and better cultivated, by poverty than by riches, as the axe of iron will cut down the tree better than the axe of gold.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Therefore, my brethren, dearest and most desired, my joy and my crown, so stand in the Lord, most beloved.

Ch. IV. In this chapter the Apostle earnestly exhorts the Philippian Christians to perseverance in the faith, unity among themselves, and a holy and Christian life, and takes leave of them with several salutations and his Apostolic benediction.

1. *Therefore*, in consideration of the indescribable glory and happiness of the resurrection of the body, incorruptible, sinless, impassible, and immortal, which Christ has promised you, and to which you look forward, as explained in the concluding verses of the last chapter, I entreat you, my brethren, and the objects of my most ardent affection, the cause and occasion of my greatest joy, and whose salvation is to be my crown and reward at the last day, to continue steadfast, as you have stood hitherto, in the faith of Jesus Christ, and in the communion of his one, true, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. They are not only his joy, says St. Chrysostom, but his glory; not only his glory, but his crown. Could there be a higher testimony to their faith and Christian virtue, than to be the crown of Paul? Happy is the prelate who will be able to say of his subjects at the last day what Paul said of the Philippians: *my joy and crown*. For if not his joy they will be his sorrow; if not his crown of glory, his confusion and condemnation.

Stand, so as to inherit the promise of Christ's resurrection Do not follow those *whose end is death*.

If St. Paul missed a *crown* by his allegiance to Jesus Christ, which is not absolutely impossible, he found another at Philippi.

2. I request Evodia, and I entreat Syntiche, to agree together in the Lord.

3. I also request thee, my brother and comrade, help those women who laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement and my other coadjutors, whose names are in the book of life.

2. Evodia and Syntiche were two women of position and influence in the Church at Philippi, who were employed in the conversion or instruction of women. Access to women was not permitted without difficulty to the other sex in the countries bordering on the Levant, and they were consequently, as a rule, instructed by women in the principles of the Christian faith. There was apparently some disagreement between the two women here named. All the Greek and Latin writers so understand the words. St. Paul proceeds to recommend them, as well as the others who were engaged in the same holy work, to the care of some man of high reputation, whom he does not name, but whom he calls his *brother and comrade*. In the Greek the word rendered by the Vulgate *germane*, brother, is an adjective: *σὺζυγε γνήσιε*. The first of these words signifies *fellow-labourer*, the figure being taken from a pair of bullocks drawing together under the same yoke. *Γνήσιε* is true, sincere, and genuine. There is much difference of opinion as to who was the person referred to. Some suppose he was one of the bishops or deacons saluted at the beginning of this Epistle; others, that he was the husband or brother of one of the two women whom St. Paul has named. Vatablus and Grotius think it was Epaphroditus, and that St. Paul had written down in the Epistle what he had already in all probability communicated to the Bishop of Philippi by word of mouth, in order that it

might be publicly known to the Philippian Church. And certainly the Bishop was the right person to be entrusted with the task of affording encouragement, support, and possibly maintenance to the female ministers and officers of the Church of which he was in charge, and reconcile them in case of any difference or disagreement. St. Chrysostom remarks that the point is not of great importance, and what is interesting is to observe the high value which the Apostle sets upon the services of these holy women, the care he took of their welfare, and the prominence he gives to their office and their names.

To the same care and solicitude St. Paul recommends also *Clement, and the rest of his fellow-labourers*, whose names it is not necessary for him to record, because they are written in God's *book of life*. The list of God's faithful servants, predestined to life eternal. There is possibly a reference to Exod. xxxii. 32. *If thou do it not, blot me also out of the book which thou hast written.* And the Lord answered, *I will blot him out of my book, who has sinned against me.* Mortal sin, therefore, or final apostasy, may occasion the erasure of a name once entered in *the book of life*. In Ps. lxxviii. 29 we read, *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written among the just.* In the book of the prophet Daniel, xii. 1, in the day when Michael the great prince shall rise up, *all thy people shall be saved who are found inscribed in the book.* And Christ said to the seventy disciples, Rejoice, not that demons are subject to you, but *because your names are written in the heavens*, Luc. x. 20. In the Apocalypse iii. 5, Christ says to the angel of the Church of Sardis: *Who overcometh, I will not blot his name out of the book of life.* But what if he is overcome? In the same mysterious prophecy we read, xiii. 8, that all who dwell on earth will worship the wild beast, whose names are not inscribed in *the book of life* of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world. And in xx. 12: *I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened, and another book was opened,*

which is that *of life*. And the dead were judged by their works, according to what was written in the books. Lastly, in the vision of the holy Catholic Church, shown in figure to St. John as the City of God, we are told, xxi. 27. There shall never enter there anything that defiles, and causes abomination and a lie, but only those who are *written in the book of life of the Lamb*. In this *book of life* were inscribed the names of the fellow-labourers of St. Paul, unknown to us. The *Clement* here mentioned was in all probability a different person from the celebrated Pontiff, St. Clement I., Bishop of Rome.

It would be unnecessary to refer, were it not that it has attracted the attention of St. Chrysostom, to an extraordinary interpretation which some writers have placed upon the opening words of verse 3, as if the *faithful colleague* referred to meant the Apostle's *wife*. To begin with, it is certain from what St. Paul says in 1. Cor. vii. 7, as well as from the unbroken current of tradition, that he never was married. Besides, the terms used in this verse are in the masculine, not only in the Greek text and the Vulgate, but in all the versions, and are so understood by all the Fathers, Greek and Latin, as well as by Calvin and Beza. The Syriac has : *my true associate*. The Ethiopic, *my brother and comrade*. The Arabic adopts the Greek word as a proper name, and reads, in the masculine, *O fair, or noble, Syzyga*. This view is also taken by some other writers, who consider Syzygus a proper name. *O noble Syzygus*. St. Chrysostom refers to the other interpretation as meaning the Apostle's wife, only to reject it as false, and Theodoret stigmatizes it as absurd. Nevertheless some modern writers, and among them Faber Stapulensis, Erasmus, Cajetan, and Catharinus have adopted it. Their arguments are criticized and refuted at considerable length by Estius.

4. Rejoice in the Lord always ; I say again, rejoice.

5. Let your modesty be known to all men. The Lord is near.

6. In nothing be solicitous : but in all prayer and entreaty, with thanksgiving, let your petitions become known before God.

7. And may the peace of God, which exceeds all sense, keep your hearts and your understanding, in Jesus Christ.

4. *Rejoice in the Lord always.* Trouble and sorrow spring continually from the vexations and disappointments of daily life. But the Christian is nevertheless, in all reason and all duty, called upon to *rejoice always* and continually on account of the glorious hope that is set before him, his adoption to be the child of God, the merit of suffering endured for Christ's sake. But it is in these privileges and hopes he is to rejoice, and not, like the Gentiles, in worldly prosperity, pleasure, or success. *Rejoice in the Lord*, and especially in your communion with him through the holy Sacraments and prayer. And since, when sufferings increase and multiply, they seem sometimes hard to bear, and we are instinctively tempted to murmur and complain, therefore *I say again*, in spite of them all, still *rejoice*. Or rather, rejoice on account of them, for suffering is the seed from which glory will spring up, and *our momentary and light affliction* will produce *an infinite weight of glory* hereafter. Rejoice, partaking the sufferings of Christ ; for if we suffer with him, we shall also with him be glorified. Your cause of joy is greater than your cause of mourning, whatever that may be, as heaven is higher than earth, and eternity longer than time.

5. Yet let this rejoicing be manifested and expressed with modesty, decorum, and sobriety, in the sight of all men. For *the Lord is near*. He will soon come to render you the reward you look for, to set you free from all pain and suffering for ever, to vindicate your confidence in him, and to judge the world which hates you. This is an additional reason for rejoicing ; your Lord is coming ; he is almost

come. But it is also a reason for sobriety, gravity, quiet and patient expectation. *Let your loins be girded, and your torches lighted in your hands*, Luc. xii. 35.

6. *In nothing be solicitous*. For the Lord is near, and all the system of this mortal life is shortly to close and terminate. In a very short time you must leave everything you possess. The Saviour you look for from heaven will crown your patience and your toils. There is, therefore, no room for solicitude regarding temporal things. As we now know, the coming of the Lord was not *near* in the literal sense in which the Apostle seems to have expected it, for centuries have rolled by, and he is not yet come. This contingency is, however, provided for in the words that follow. *In all*, at all times, on all occasions, in every business, *let your petitions become known in the presence of God*, and rise before his throne. The word *all* should not be joined with *prayer*, the adjective and substantive being of different genders in the Greek; *at all times by prayer*. And *with thanksgiving*, because the omnipotence and the mercy of God render it certain that your prayers will be heard and granted, if not precisely in the terms of your petition, in some still better way. Saint Chrysostom observes that we are in reason and duty bound to give thanks to God for all things, even trouble and affliction, because we can be by faith firmly persuaded that all things will turn to our advantage and eternal profit, though we do not always understand how. Prayers, he adds, that are thus accompanied with thanksgiving, God accepts and recognises, and they *become known before the presence of God*, otherwise he will not always notice them.

The Greek word for thanksgiving is *eucharist*, and the Apostle's words will bear the meaning, in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

7. *The peace of God*, the knowledge and conviction that you are at peace with God, which is a source of comfort and satisfaction greater than the intelligence can understand, *keep your hearts and minds*, The Greek text and the Syriac

read *shall keep*. As a garrison keeps a fortress, safe from the assaults of despondency and sorrow, doubt or unbelief. *In Christ Jesus*, by the power of Christ, and by the assurance of his divine compassion and human sympathy.

8. For the rest, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever modest, whatever just, whatever holy, whatever lovely, whatever of good fame; if there is any virtue, if any praise of discipline, think on these things.

9. Those things also which you learned, and received, and heard, and saw in me, these do; and the God of peace will be with you.

8. *For the rest, brethren.* This is the second time the Apostle has begun anew with these words: In ch. iii. 1, he said, *For the rest, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord*, and then he proceeded to show how and why; because by standing firm in the faith of Christ and in the communion of his true Church, we are assured of sharing the glory of his resurrection. Now, in concluding, he still finds a few more words to say. He has told the Philippians what to believe, what to expect, what to do, and whom to imitate; now he tells them what to think of. For the direction of the mind, and choice of subjects of reflection, are to a great extent in our own power. The human mind, in waking hours, is ceaselessly active, and many more thoughts pass through its wonderful mechanism than can be communicated in speech to others. It is a common remark that we could easily tell the character and disposition of any man if we knew what he habitually thinks of. What a Christian should habitually think of, St. Paul tells us in these well-known words. *All things that are true.* We know what is *true* about Almighty God, his power, his wisdom, his goodness, and providence. And we know what is *true* of ourselves. But about our neighbour we know not what is true, because we cannot see his heart, and our judgment of him will therefore most likely not be among

the things that are *true*. All things that are *modest*, in the Greek *σεμνὰ*, worthy of respect, honour, and veneration. All things *just*, dwelling on the good we see, rather than the evil. All things *holy*; the present Greek text has *pure*, *ἁγνὰ*. The translator of the Vulgate seems to have read *ἁγία*; but that which is holy is pure, and that which is pure is holy, and in the result it will be very much the same. All things *lovely*, or amiable; all things that are good and beautiful, as all God's works are, as they came from his hands, and when they are not degraded by sin. All that is of *good fame*; held in honour and respect among men. For the human heart, in all its ruin, although it has lost the power of attaining and accomplishing what is truly good and noble, has never lost its appreciation of it, and admiration for it; and by this faculty the pagan world turned to Jesus Christ, when they knew him, and adored and acknowledged him as the ideal and crown of perfection, the embodiment of the divine in human nature. That which men acknowledge that they truly reverence and hold in honour, will not be an unfit subject of Christian meditation. *If there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline*, the subjugation of vice, the triumph of the spiritual over the lower nature, in any instances we know or hear of: think of these things. The words of *discipline* are not in the Greek, and are added by the Vulgate. But it is probable also that the Apostle says all this in a practical sense. Think on these things to do them, *cogitate*, habitually plan and purpose, to act with sincerity and honesty, with chastity and modesty, truth and justice, as becomes believers in Jesus Christ, cultivating the manners and dispositions which give you favour with God and man, which will render your name and reputation an honour to the faith you profess. Imitate the holy examples of the Saints, who by the discipline of the Christian life have triumphed over sin. The religious life undoubtedly affords the fullest and fairest opportunity for cultivating such habits of thought as these; and they are happy whom God has called to lead thus on earth the life of

angels. But to all Christians, even in the secular life, St. Paul has given, in these words, a standard to aim at, and a guide to follow. The lives of the Saints who have flourished in this mortal life, and entered Paradise, since the great Apostle lived on earth, and which have been so amply recorded for our devotion, afford an unfailing store of illustration of these beautiful words, of instances, multiplied and varied by every variety of human character and disposition, and of outward circumstances, of all that is lovely, and of good fame, of the victory of *virtue*, and the *praise of discipline*.

9. What you learned from my teaching when I was at Philippi; what you have read in this Epistle; what you have heard of me during my absence from you; what you saw in me while I was with you; this do. Do what I have preached and written, said and done. This, St. Chrysostom observes, is the best way of teaching, namely by example. And we have in these words the three great rules of Christian belief and life; namely, the doctrine preached or written by the Apostles in their own words; Apostolic tradition; and the life and example of the Apostles. It is indeed not usual for a Christian teacher to hold himself forth as a model of perfect practice. What the Apostle means is that there were others professing to be Christian teachers who taught a very different doctrine and exhibited a very different example, and that systematically, and that these heretical guides were to be avoided and his own example followed.

10. And I rejoiced vehemently in the Lord, that at length at some time or other you flourished again to feel for me, as also you used to feel, but you were occupied.

11. Not that I speak as if in want: for I have learned to be content in whatever condition I am.

12. I know both how to be humbled, and how to abound, I have experience everywhere and in all things, both to be satisfied, and to hunger, to abound, and to suffer penury.

13. I can do all things in him who strengthens me.

14. Nevertheless you did well, communicating to my trouble.

10. The Greek has : I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that now at any rate your care and sympathy for me has sprung up again ; as to which, you did care for me, but had not the power or opportunity of showing it. The meaning is, your care for me, shown in the mission of Epaphroditus, afforded me the greatest joy, *in the Lord*, not so much for the evidence of personal regard for me, as for the proof of your love for Christ. And it is a renewal or springing up again of the old feelings of regard and reverence you manifested for me when I was at Philippi. This affection I have no doubt you continued to feel for me during the interval occupied by my journey to the East and two years' imprisonment at Cæsarea, and I am certain that only want of means, or want of opportunity, or difficulty of communication, prevented your supplying my wants at that time. Some interpreters have, however, seen in the words *sicut et sentiebatis* an implied rebuke or complaint, as if he felt he had been neglected in the interval. You cared for my welfare once, when I was among you years ago. I am delighted that this feeling has flourished again, as a tree which has lost its foliage in winter will renew it in the spring, and I am willing to believe that it was not so much forgetfulness or inattention which prevented your sending to me before, as want of opportunity ; which the Vulgate renders by *occupati eratis*. If any such rebuke is intended, it is administered with extreme gentleness and delicacy ; and in the next verse the Apostle goes on to protest that it is not on his own account, but on theirs, that he experienced such keen satisfaction in receiving the supply they sent him, and the expression of their sympathy.

11. *Not that I speak as if in want.* I am not complaining of my poverty, or rejoicing that you have relieved it. Poverty and abundance have long since become matters of absolute

indifference to me. *I have learned*, under the teaching of long and arduous experience, the lesson of content, wherever I may be, in prison or free, however I may be circumstanced, in poverty or wealth. I have learned to be *αὐτάρκης*, independent or sufficient for myself. This idea he repeats and expands in the next verse.

12. I know what it is to be humiliated, and I know what it is to abound; and I know how to bear humiliation, and how to bear exaltation. I have been *initiated*, *μεμύημαι*, into the whole mystery of the endurance of every change of fortune. To have all that I require, and to have less than will satisfy hunger, to have more than I want, and less, all this I know by long experience.

13. *I can do all things in him who strengthens me.* The Greek has, *in Christ who strengthens me.* Πάντα ἰσχύω. I have all power of endurance, and am become independent of outward circumstances, so constant, so invigorating, so adequate to all my wants is the eternal strength with which Christ our Lord, whom I receive in the daily Sacrifice, continually supplies me. The life of the Apostle had become, as nearly as is possible consistently with the laws of physical existence, like that life in the *spiritual body* of which he speaks in 1 Cor. xv. 4, independent of passing circumstances and unaffected by change. The reason he makes this statement probably is, lest they should feel too great remorse or regret at having so long neglected to provide for him, and having in a sense forgotten him, when he left them, as if such neglect might possibly have in some degree hindered his work, or occasioned him unnecessary privation or humiliation. And he adds, that the supplies with which they had now furnished him, though not absolutely necessary for him, were not on that account any the less acceptable, and that he had received them with genuine satisfaction and gratitude. *You have done well, in communicating to my trouble*, none the less, that I am long since become *independent in Christ*, nor does my independence and sufficiency diminish my gratitude to you.

15. And you also know, Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, no Church communicated to me on account of gift and receipt, unless you only ;

16. Because you sent money once and twice to Thessalonica for my use.

17. Not that I seek a gift, but I seek abundant fruit on your account.

18. But I have all things and abound : I am filled with the gifts you sent by Epaphroditus, an odour of sweetness, a victim accepted, pleasing to God.

15. *You also know, Philippians.* In order more emphatically to express the sincerity of his gratitude to the Philippians, the Apostle recalls to their memory the liberal assistance they had rendered to him on the occasion of his first visit to their town, some seven years before. The circumstances under which he *left Macedonia* at that time are related in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. *The beginning of the Gospel*, means : the time when I first preached the Gospel of Christ in your country. St. Paul had accepted these gifts from the Philippians, but he protests, and calls them to witness as to a fact within their knowledge, that they were the only Christian congregation from whom he had accepted money. Had he acted otherwise, he would have been rich. From the Christians of Corinth he would take nothing, as is evident to every reader of the two Epistles he addressed to them, especially 1 Cor. iv. ix. 7. &c. In 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9, he expressly says that all his supplies were drawn from Philippi, and he had taken nothing from the Corinthians, even while in Greece. *Communicated to me in account of given and received*, you only opened with me a debtor and creditor account, having on one side the material advantages they bestowed on me, on the other the spiritual blessings they received themselves. Almsgiving, St. Chrysostom remarks, is a negotiation or exchange, in which by means

of earthly goods, heaven is bought, and the giver gets very much more than the receiver, because the alms given in this life is consumed, but the price received for it is inexhaustible. No better investment for money can be found anywhere, for while the purchasers are still on earth, the value received is eternal in the heavens. Yet those who are too poor to give alms need not despair, for it is not the money which buys celestial happiness, but the mind and disposition with which it is given, the humanity and mercy that prompt the gift, and what is required is goodwill, not wealth. With this you may effect in two minutes the purchase of the kingdom of the heavens. He who offers to God goodwill, offers himself. He who offers himself, offers a human sacrifice, and there is nothing in the material universe more valuable than man.

16. *You sent more than once to Thessalonica to supply my wants.* A still greater instance of their care and affection, for it extended to him even in his absence.

17. *Not that I seek a gift.* His reminder in verse 15 that they were the only Christian community which supplied him with money, was intended as a suggestion that their bounty should not cease, and that a time might come when further supplies would be acceptable. I am not seeking a gift; but I do *seek abundant fruit*, a large balance on your side of the account, in the abundance of the eternal reward you will receive.

18. *But for the present I have all things, and more than I want.* Your bishop Epaphroditus has faithfully and honourably handed over to me the sums you entrusted to him, which are in reality offered, not to me, but to God, and God has accepted them through me, from your hands, as the fragrant smoke of incense, as a victim slain on his altar, and favourably received by the Divine Majesty to whom the gift is brought. But as it is not the smoke of the incense which renders the sacrifice acceptable, but the intention and dis-

position of the sacrificer, so it is not the money, but the goodwill of the giver, with which God is well pleased.

19. And may my God fulfil every desire of yours, according to his riches, in glory in Christ Jesus.

20. And to our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21. Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.

22. The brethren who are with me salute you. All the saints salute you, but especially those who are of the house of Cæsar.

23. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

19. *May God fulfil every desire of yours.* The Greek has *shall fulfil. Every desire.* The Greek text has three different readings, χαρὰν, joy, χάρις, grace, and χρείαν, need or necessity. Saint Chrysostom understands this last one, and supposes the Apostle to refer to the temporary pressure or poverty which had prevented the Philippians sending him for some time their usual supply, as in verse 10, *you were occupied*, or prevented by want of means or opportunity. This necessity God shall supply. But as the Apostle adds, *according to his riches, in glory, in Christ Jesus*, it seems easier to understand God shall fulfil all your joy, accomplish all you wish for and desire, out of, and in proportion to, his infinite bounty and infinite resources, in the glory of his presence, *in Christ Jesus*, who is the glory of God, the riches of God, and the joy and reward of the saints for eternity. In anticipation of which the Apostle adds the prayer in verse 20, *To God our Father be glory for ever.*

21. *Salute every saint.* For all Christ's people are holy. *The brethren who are with me*, the Christians of the Church of Rome, who were to be found among all orders and degrees, but those who had more particularly charged the Apostle

with this message, were the officials of the emperor's court and household. If such had learned to despise all earthly things for the love of their heavenly King, much more could the Philippians do the same.

23. The Greek text has : *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.* And adds the following subscription : *Written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.*

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Nothing so much contributes to calmness of mind, and moderation and tranquillity of manner, which is its outward expression, as well as to the cultivation of all other Christian graces, as reflection on the near approach of the judgment of Almighty God. For this reason Jesus Christ concealed from human knowledge the date of his second advent, and permitted his Apostles to announce it as near at hand, that we may live in continued expectation of it. *A little while*, he said to them *and you shall not see me*, for I am about to ascend to heaven, and a cloud will take me out of your sight. Again, *a little while, and you shall see me*, for I shall return in the clouds of heaven, as I went up, and you, and all mankind, living and dead, will see me then. The first of these intervals lasted forty days ; the other, how long will it endure ? Yet, in comparison with eternity, it is a little while. For compared with infinity, all that is finite is nothing. All time, when it is past, seems short ; when Christ comes, he will seem to have been absent but *a little while. The Lord is near.* This world is soon about to end ; how long shall I continue to fix my hopes and affections on it ? *The Lord is near*, and I must give an account of all I possess. Why should I desire more than is necessary, since that is all he really gives me to enjoy, and all else is superfluous ? *The Lord is near*, the Saviour who is to bring me my reward ; why do I grow weary under trouble ? *The Lord is near*, who will judge every one according to his work. Why

do I envy the pleasures, the distractions, the enjoyments of the children of this world? *The Lord is near.* Moderation, gentleness, quietness, are the soul's attitude of expectation, awaiting the sound of the Archangel's voice, and the trumpet of God, to announce the judgment, and call all former generations from their graves. All the world must see, and doubtless does see, that this is the attitude of expectation of the Church of Christ, and has been for eighteen hundred years. The Saints have let the world go. They have been composed and gentle in their words, manners, actions, sentiments, and patient in suffering, for they look for an eternal crown. They have been moderate in their use of earthly things, so far as possible they have relinquished them, that they may have the less for which to render an account. Yet doing all this with joy and hope, for *the Lord is near*, and your redemption and deliverance draws nigh.



THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

P R E F A C E .

Colossæ was a town in Phrygia, not far from Laodicea and Hierapolis, never visited by Saint Paul : but a Christian Church had been founded there during the residence of the Apostle at Ephesus A.D. 56-58, a time when the effects of his preaching extended far beyond his bodily presence, and the word of the Lord grew mightily and was confirmed, Act. xix. 20. It is recorded by Orosius, and by Eusebius in his Chronicle, that the cities of Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, were destroyed by an earthquake, not long after the date at which this Epistle was written, but they were in all probability rebuilt, as Laodicea certainly was, being mentioned in the Apocalypse, iii. 14.

Although Saint Paul never personally visited Colossæ, he sent a bishop there, namely Epaphras, i. 7. The occasion of writing this letter, sent from Rome during his first imprisonment, A.D. 62-64, was the introduction at Colossæ of the same false philosophy, that of the followers of Simon Magus, which had proved so dangerous to the faith of the Ephesians. They seem to have taught, among other errors, that certain angels, and not Christ, are the authors and mediators of man's salvation, and that it is through these angels, and not through Christ, that we are to draw near to God the Father. The Apostle combats these errors, and further exhorts the Colossians to holiness of life, in language of great power and beauty. This Epistle may be considered an epitome of that addressed to the Ephesians, the argument and sometimes

the language being very similar. Saint Chrysostom says, in the opening of his commentary upon this Epistle, that this and the other letters written by Saint Paul during his imprisonment at Rome, are like the productions of some strong warrior pausing for a moment in the midst of his career of conflict and victory. It was written A.D. 62 and sent by Tychicus and Onesimus. The former was the bearer also of the Epistle of the Ephesians. The latter was a native of Colossæ (iv. 9) and carried thither at the same time the Epistle to Philemon, with which he was entrusted. Onesimus was afterwards the successor of Saint Timothy in the patriarchal see of Ephesus.



CHAPTER I.

Paul, Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Timotheus the brother :

2. To those who are at Colossæ holy and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus.

3. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you ;

4. Hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love you have for all the saints,

5. On account of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens, which you heard in the word of the truth of the Gospel,

6. Which has come to you, as it is in all the world, and fructifies and grows, as in you, from the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth.

7. As you learned of Epaphras, our most dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ Jesus,

8. Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

Chapter I. In this chapter the Apostle confirms by his authority and testimony the doctrine which the Colossian Christians had learned from Epaphras ; refutes certain errors of the heretics by a statement of the Catholic faith on those points ; and protests that he is the real and authorized minister of Jesus Christ, for whose sake it is his boast and glory to have suffered persecution.

Timotheus the brother. Saint Timothy was now in Rome with Saint Paul, but he was well known to the Christians of Asia, who highly esteemed him. The Apostle probably styles himself Apostle *through the will of God* as a protest

against the false apostles of the heretics, who were appointed by no one but themselves. *To those*, the Vulgate gives the pronoun for the Greek article. The Greek text runs: To the saints, and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus, who are at Colossæ. *Saints*, because redeemed by Christ's death and hallowed in Baptism. *Faithful*, Saint Chrysostom says, because they believed in mysteries which heretofore were not revealed even to angels, and believing, led a life worthy of the God whom they confessed. *Brethren*, because all were alike regenerate through the blood of Christ. The Apostle gives thanks to God for the *faith* of the Colossians, of which he had heard; for their *love* to all the saints; and for the *hope* laid up for them in heaven. In that hope they had believed, when they heard it proclaimed by the word of the Gospel, which is the word of truth. That *word* is now resounding all the world over, that is in the more important and civilised portions of the world in Europe, Asia, Africa, and by fame and report further still. The number of its converts is daily and rapidly increasing. *Est, fructificat, crescit*, it is everywhere found, everywhere dominant, everywhere permanent, says St. Chrysostom, and *fructifies* in good works, like a tree still spreading its branches while it bears its fruit. As it does among you, that is, fructifies and grows, ever since the day you heard the preaching, and *knew the grace of God in truth*, recognised it as God's truth, the revelation of his grace and favour to a lost world. Epaphras, who conveyed the message of salvation to you, learned it from me, his fellow-servant. You may safely trust the doctrine he delivered to you, for he is for you a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and disregard and set aside the cavils of his rivals and opponents, the teachers of heresy. Epaphras has further made known or manifested to us your charity in the spirit, especially your earnest desire and anxiety for my welfare and deliverance.

9. Therefore we also, from the day we heard, cease not

praying for you and imploring that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ;

10. That you walk worthily of God through all, pleasing in every good work, fruit-bearing and growing in the science of God ;

11. In all virtue strengthened according to the might of his glory in all patience and long suffering, with joy,

12. Giving thanks to God the Father, who made us worthy of a portion of the lot of the saints in light ;

13. Who delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love,

14. In whom we have the redemption through his blood, the remission of sins.

Having returned thanks to God for the graces bestowed on the Christians of Colossæ, Saint Paul proceeds to pray for them. He repeats in verse 9 what he said in verse 3, that he had not ceased to pray for them since he heard of their conversion to Christ. His prayer was that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will, and with all *wisdom*, the apprehension of the great mysteries of faith, and spiritual *understanding*, or prudence, in the application of these mysteries to practice in their daily lives. Saint Chrysostom thinks this is said in special reference to the efforts of the heretics to mislead them by a false wisdom, which was not spiritual, but mundane and human. The Vulgate has in verse 9 *agnitione voluntatis ejus*, the power of recognition of what is truly the will of God, when the truth and the error are placed in contrast side by side before their minds. The recognition of God's will and determination to reconcile mankind to himself, not by the ministry of angels, but through his own only-begotten Son. So that knowing this you may *walk worthily of God* in every respect. The Greek has *worthily of the Lord*, that is of Christ, as befits his disciples, and therefore *pleasing* to God the Father, whose pleasure is in the

Son of his love, and in those who belong to Him. *Pleasing God in every good work.* In the Greek this is attached to the words that follow: *in all pleasing*, and *in every good work fructifying and growing* in the knowledge of God. This is to please God, and to walk worthily of him. To *walk* is to continue and persevere. The word rendered in the Vulgate by *scientia* in this verse is the same which is translated *agnitione* in verse 10. There it was the knowledge of God's will, for the redemption of the world through Christ, which may be fully known and understood; here the knowledge of God's *nature*, in which we may continually fructify and grow; but never know fully. Next the Apostle prays that the Christians of Colossæ may be strengthened in all virtue (the Greek has, in all strength) according to the power of his glory, in all patience and long-suffering and joy. That is, the very strength of God's strength, the victorious splendour of God's glory, is put in action and exhibited to the world, by the persecutions which his saints are exposed to, because they bear them, not only with complete and unfailing patience and endurance, to the utmost extent—in *all* patience and long suffering—but actually with joy. The Apostles, having been scourged, went from the presence of the council rejoicing, Act. v. 41. Greater courage is shown in suffering than in action. Scævola said *fortia agere Romanorum est*, but *fortia pati* is equally a mark of Christians. The Syriac version attaches the words *with joy* at the end of verse 11 to the opening words of verse 12; *with joy giving thanks to God the Father.* It was part of the Apostle's prayer that the Colossians should so give thanks. But Saint Chrysostom and Theodoret are of opinion, with greater probability, that Saint Paul uses the words *giving thanks to God the Father* of himself, in continuation of the *orantes et postulantes* of verse 9. He is passing on to a new subject, and there is a change of person in verse 12, for whereas he has before said *impleamini, ambuletis*, he now says *dignos nos fecit.* He enters here upon what is in fact the

principal object of the whole Epistle, namely to state and maintain the evangelical doctrine of Christ as the true Saviour of the world, in opposition to the errors of the heretics. He begins therefore by thanking God the Father, who has made us worthy of a portion of *the inheritance of the saints in light*. You, and me, and all Christian people, previously unworthy of any such promotion, as being God's enemies, he has rendered, by his grace alone, worthy to be written and numbered among his Saints, and receive a portion of their eternal inheritance. *In light* signifies either the means by which this inheritance is attained, namely, the light of faith ; or else it is said of the lot and inheritance of the Saints, which is *in light*, in the clear vision of God. Or possibly both meanings may be included, for the light of faith on earth, and the light of glory in heaven, are both portions of the inheritance of the Saints. God the Father has further delivered us from *the power of darkness*, the tyranny of evil spirits, who are the princes of darkness, from infidelity and sin, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. *The Son of his love* is a Hebraism for *his beloved Son*, as they said *the mountain of holiness* for *the holy mountain*. This translation is effected by Baptism, by which we are delivered from the power of the devil, and grafted into the mystical body of Christ, his Church, which is the kingdom of light ; and through the blood of Christ have obtained *redemption* or deliverance, that is, the remission of sins.

15. Who is the image of God the invisible, firstborn of all creation ;

16. Because in him all things were created, in the heavens and in earth, visible and invisible, whether Thrones, or Dominations, or Principalities, or Powers ; all were created through him and in him ;

17. And he is before all, and in him all things consist.

God the Son is the image of God the Father, who is

invisible, *whom no man has seen nor can see* (1 Tim. vi.), in all things like him, equal to him, consubstantial with him, proceeding from him *per intellectum*, his equal Word. And through this consubstantial Image of the Father, painted in the colours of the flesh, he becomes visible in time, who is invisible in eternity. *Firstborn of all creation*, that is, born before all creation, and therefore higher in dignity than anything created; elder than creation by all eternity, himself its Creator in time. *First born*, Saint Chrysostom observes, not *first created*. It is generation, not creation, which is predicated of him. *Because*, this marks that what follows is an explanation of the statement just made. Christ is the first-born of creation in this sense, that *in him all things were made*. Made by God the Father through the agency or intervention of God the Word. In heaven or in earth, visible or invisible, and including therefore the angels (this is stated in opposition to the doctrine of Simon Magus) however lofty their dignity, however great their powers and faculties. All created things were made *through* Christ, and, in the Greek, *to* or *for* him. God the Father did not create the universe by himself, or for himself, but it was made through the agency of the Son, and for the pleasure of the Son. He is *before all creatures* in time, and in him they consist and are kept in being.

18. And he is the head of the body, the Church, who is the principle, the first-begotten from the dead; that he may in all things hold primacy.

19. Because in him it pleased God that all fullness should dwell. Christ is the head of the Church, and the head is the seat and source of life, will, and sensation. And he is the Principle, Principium. Saint John applies this term to God the Father: *In Principio*, in the Principle, in the great First Cause, in the bosom of the Father from eternity, *was the Word*. But Moses seems to apply it to the Son, as the Principle or beginning of the Creation: *In Principio*, in the Principle, in

the Divine Word, God the Father created the heavens and the earth. But some Greek writers instead of ἀρχὴ read ἀπαρχή, which means literally the beginning of a sacrifice, and was usually a lock of hair cut from the head of the victim and thrown into the fire. Generally it came to mean the first-fruits, the representative or more valuable part of anything. Saint Chrysostom says: He calls him the first-fruits, implying that he has hallowed us all by the oblation of his sacrifice. The first-fruits of the human race, offered for the rest in sacrifice to God; and also the Prince of the resurrection, the first-born from the dead. Thus *in all things he holds primacy* and pre-eminence, as the only-begotten son of the Father, as the author and beginner of the creation, as the Victim for mankind, as the Head of the Church, as the leader of the resurrection. For *it pleased* the Father, of his own love and generosity, of free grace, not the merit of Christ, that in Christ all fullness should dwell, the perfection of wisdom, grace, and power. Men receive these gifts in part, Christ has them all, and in all fullness. And in him *they dwell*, perpetually and inseparably, both by grace and in his Divine nature. But the life that dwells in the head flows also into the body, and having recourse to Christ we draw from the fullness of the fountain of divine grace.

20. And through him to reconcile all things to himself, making peace through the blood of his Cross, whether the things that are on earth, or the things that are in the heavens.

The infinitive depends upon *complacent* in the previous verse. It was the good pleasure of the Father to reconcile all things to himself by the blood of Christ shed on the Cross. The words *in ipsum* are a Hebraism, and equivalent to *sibi*. Sin had introduced enmity between heaven and earth, but by the Cross of Christ sin is done away. By the blood of Christ angels and men are *made at peace*.

21. And you, though once you were alienated and enemies in sense in evil works :

22. But now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and immaculate and blameless before him ;

23. If however you remain founded in the faith, and settled and immoveable from the hope of the Gospel which you heard, which was preached in the whole creation which is under heaven ; of which I Paul was made a minister.

24. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh, for his body, which is the Church,

25. Of which I was made a minister according to the dispensation of God which was given me to you, to fulfil the word of God.

26. Saint Paul here applies to the Colossians in particular what he has just said of the world in general. God has reconciled all things to himself ; he has therefore reconciled you, although once, and not very long since, you were alienated from him, and in mind and disposition, as the Syriac says by hostile feeling, had become his enemies, acting as such *by wicked works*, by which he is offended. All mortal sins are overt acts of hostility against God, and cause him to regard those who do them as his enemies ; although of this fact sinners are sometimes wholly unconscious, as the Colossians probably were before their conversion to the Christian faith. Now, however, Jesus Christ has reconciled you to his Father by his death, and presented you before him holy, immaculate, free from all blame, by the complete remission of your sins in Baptism. The statement that Christ suffered death *in corpore carnis ejus* is probably insisted on, because it was one of the errors of the heretics that the body of Christ was visionary and not real, and his death only apparent. Holding as they did the pseudo-philosophical doctrine of the inherent and original impurity of matter, they pretended that contact of the Deity with the material world

was impossible, and they therefore denied the reality of the Incarnation of the Word, of his body, and of his death and resurrection. And immaculate and blameless you will still remain, in God's sight, as long as you adhere to the Catholic faith, and hold to the hope of eternal life which the Gospel sets before you, namely at the resurrection of the dead, another dogma of the faith which the heretics derided and denied. This faith and hope, delivered to you by Epaphras, is no invention of his, or of mine, but is the same Gospel which for years past has been proclaimed by all the apostles to all nations under heaven, west and east, to the furthest limits of the Roman empire and beyond them, and which I Paul have myself proclaimed all over the West of Asia, and in great part of Europe. I am proclaiming it now in the centre and capital of the empire, where I suffer imprisonment on your behalf, on a charge, the recognition of the Son of Mary as our Lord and King, of which you are equally guilty with myself, and I bear this and all my other sufferings, not only patiently, but actually with joy, because I have a share in the sufferings of Christ, who, though his own were sufficient for the redemption of the world, and many worlds, did they exist, has nevertheless left a legacy of suffering to be filled up and completed by those who proclaim his empire, and those who embrace it, to the end of time, that they may be partakers with him of his eternal reward. As Christ suffered in the body of his mortal flesh when he dwelt on earth, so now he suffers in his mystical body, the Church, and prolongs his passion until his coming again. And I, and all who believe in him, suffer, as he suffered, *in the flesh*, while in heart and soul *I rejoice*. And my choice and appointment to the office I hold was not made in any ordinary way, nor was I chosen like the other Apostles, my colleagues, but according to *the dispensation of God towards you*, the Gentile nations, for the fulfilment of God's great promise and purpose, the call of the Gentile nations to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It would seem that the Colossians, dwelling as they

did in a somewhat remote portion of Phrygia, had been puzzled and bewildered by the confident assertions of the heretical teachers who had found their way among them, and who assured them that the teaching of Epaphras was an invention of his own, or an inaccurate representation of that of St. Paul, that neither Paul nor Epaphras could be trusted as correctly conveying to them these important truths, and that the real doctrine of Christ was only to be found in the heretic philosophy. The assurance thus solemnly given them by Saint Paul, and sent from his prison in Rome, could not but be highly satisfactory, and calculated to ensure their full confidence in their pastor and prelate. It is also not improbable that they had been told that Saint Paul's imprisonment was a proof that he was an impostor and a criminal, on which account he assures them that he is only filling up what remained of the passion of Christ, and that while he suffered in the flesh he rejoiced in hope.

26. The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and the generations, but is now manifested to his saints,

27. To whom God willed to make known the riches of the glory of this sacrament among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

28. Whom we announce, reproving every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

29. In which also I labour, striving according to his operation which he operates in me in power.

The call of the Gentiles to the faith was a mystery hidden from former ages and generation, now revealed to believers in Christ. Saint Paul states and explains this in similar language, but at greater length, in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. He does not here state formally what is *the word of God* and *the mystery* to which he refers, because he was aware that the Colossians could have no

doubt of his meaning. To the saints, and first and especially to the Apostles, God has been pleased to reveal the immense fullness and glory of the blessing which the faith of Jesus Christ confers upon the Gentile nations. In Eph. iii. 6 he describes it thus: that the nations should be co-heirs and partners of the promise of God in Christ Jesus—everlasting salvation and the joy of heaven—through the Gospel. Here he says that this mystery is nothing less than *Christ in you*, the real and actual presence of Christ in you and among you in this life, and *the hope of glory*, the certain expectation of everlasting glory in heaven, for the faithful believer. The same Greek word is rendered *mysterium* in verse 26 and *sacramentum* in verse 27, in the Vulgate. This great privilege and glorious hope we, the Apostles, are engaged in proclaiming to the nations, *reproving and teaching every man*. The word *νουθετοῦντες* signifies warning and admonishing, of the necessity of faith in Christ, of the coming judgment of God upon those who reject him and despise his promises. *Every man*, without distinction. The command of Christ was, Go and evangelise all the nations. The Apostle, when he wrote this, was looking forward to the opportunity of delivering his message to the master of the Roman world. Perhaps there is also a reference to Simon Magus and the heretic teachers, who set themselves up above the Apostles, pretending to the possession of a higher wisdom. Simon himself had once been solemnly warned and *reproved* by Saint Peter at Samaria, Act. viii. 20-23. For the Gospel we teach is the true and perfect *wisdom*, not like the profane speculations of the heretics, a tissue of human invention or suggestions of Satan. To present to God *every man*, not only a few selected and chosen out of mankind, but if possible the entire human race, perfect in Christ. For the will and counsel of God is that *the nations*, all nations and populations of the globe, shall be co-heirs and co-partners of *the promise of God in Christ*, in all *the richness of the glory of this sacrament*. Not that every individual can attain complete spiritual *perfection*

in this life, for this varies in degree, and in its highest degree is reached by few ; but in another sense, in which Saint Paul here uses the expression, man is said to be *perfect* if he lives and dies in communion with God through the sacraments, and has obtained remission of sins, and will ultimately attain to everlasting life, and in this sense there is nothing to prevent the whole race being presented *perfect in Christ Jesus*. And in this great task I also, as one of the Apostolic College, have my part and share, labouring more abundantly than all, and you may fully trust me, and those whom I commission and accredit, as authorised exponents of *the word of God*, the *mystery* of salvation, now made known and published to the world. More especially so, because the operation of God is plainly visible in the miracles which he permits to be wrought by my hands, which are great, numerous, and striking, an indisputable proof that the God who sent me *works with me in power*.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Jesus Christ was willing and eager to be in his own Person the only sufferer for the sins of men ; to bear, alone and unaided, all the immense aggregate of ills, troubles, sorrows, torments, which have been the lot of all the human race from the fall in Eden to the end of the world. But this was not the will of God, who by the mysterious law of creation had ordained that suffering shall be the road that leads to eternal glory. What therefore Christ suffered in will, in mind, in disposition, in desire, this his people are left to suffer in the body, and thus complement the passion of Christ. This is the real reason why men suffer and die. Thus, Saint Leo says, the passion of Christ is perpetuated to the end of the world. Christ, says Primasius, began the passion ; the Church continues it. But though the people of Christ suffer in the flesh, as Saint Paul says he did, that which Christ suffered in heart and will, they do not suffer in soul, for, on

the contrary, they rejoice in their sufferings. They rejoice, because they have part in the passion of Christ, as his Mother suffered with him through sympathy, as Simon of Cyrene carried his cross to Calvary. *Impleo reliquias afflictionum Christi*, is the Latin rendering of the Apostle's words as given in the Ethiopic version of his Epistles. More especially are they true of the preachers of the Gospel, from the days of the Apostles to our own, and will be to the end of the world. For as by God's eternal decree it was appointed that Christ should suffer and die for the Church, so by the same decree was it appointed that the Apostles, and apostolic men who have since carried on their work of evangelization, as his legates and ministers, should for the Church suffer, and many die. *I will show him how much he must suffer*, how much I have left for him to suffer, for the Church, my body, Act. ix. 16. The full signification of this law of God's kingdom, and the relation between the suffering and the reward, we cannot in this life fully understand. The one grows out of the other as the tree grows out of the earth in which its root is fixed; but we can believe the statement of the Apostle that all the sorrows and troubles of life are unworthy of mention, absolutely nothing, things to laugh at, compared with the splendour of the glory which shall be poured upon his Saints, in the day when He returns to reward them for all they have done and suffered for his sake.

CHAPTER II.

1. But I wish you to know what anxiety I have for you, and for those who are at Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my face in the flesh ;

2. That their hearts may be consoled, instructed in charity, and to all riches of the plentitude of understanding, to recognition of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ Jesus ;

3. In whom all the treasures of wisdom and science are hidden.

Chapter II. In this chapter the Apostle cautions the Christians of Colossæ not to listen to teachers of heresy, particularly with regard to circumcision, the worship of certain angels, and other superstitious observances.

Saint Paul was not personally acquainted with the Christians of Colossæ and Laodicea, and was the more anxious on that account, for they were for that reason more exposed to the sinister influence of the heretical teachers, who unsettled their faith, told them they were not in the right way of salvation, and divided them into parties. He wishes their minds to be set at rest, and that they might live in quiet enjoyment of the heavenly hopes they had embraced, and in good understanding with one another. *Consoled in heart, instructed in charity.* The Syriac version reads: That their hearts may take comfort, and they with charity draw near to all the riches of persuasion, and intelligent recognition of the hidden God, both the Father and Christ. That is, that there may be no lingering doubt in your minds, but with perfect confidence, complete surrender of affection, and certitude of belief, you embrace the knowledge of the God

now for the first time revealed to you, whom Christ has made known to man, his Father and ours. For the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*, of which the followers of Simon profess to hold the key, as of a recondite mystery known only to themselves and those to whom they choose to reveal it—on which account they were called *gnostici*, or pretenders to true *knowledge*—these treasures of truth are in reality *hidden* in Christ. Hidden and revealed. Revealed to all who seek him in faith, hidden from all the world beside. Wisdom, science, truth, are all *hidden* in Jesus Christ. Without him, all is vanity, error, and illusion. For the great central truth of all truths, on which all knowledge and all existence depends, is the relation which subsists from all eternity between the Father and the Son ; *the mystery of God*, the eternal love that reigns between the *Father and Christ Jesus* ; and how this led to his Incarnation. Unless you set out with this knowledge, you can know nothing truly.

4. But I say this, that no one deceive you in sublimity of language.

5. For although in the body I am absent from you, yet in spirit I am with you, rejoicing and seeing your order, and the steadfastness of your faith which is in Christ.

6. For as you received Jesus Christ the Lord, in him walk,

7. Rooted and built up in him, and strengthened in faith, as also you have learned, abounding in him in thanksgiving.

8. See that none deceive you through philosophy and empty fallacy ; according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ.

9. Because in him dwells all the plenitude of deity in the body.

10. And you are fulfilled in him, who is the head of all principality and power.

I say this, namely, that all wisdom and science dwells in

Christ, because I know how greatly your faith is endangered by the teachers of error, who are endeavouring to deceive you with the pompous and imposing terms of their philosophy. The Greek has, with plausible or persuasive words. It is true that I am separated from you by long distance, but I am present by full cognizance, perhaps supernatural cognizance, of all the malice of these wicked men, and the arguments they employ, and could expose them if I chose. This, St. Chrysostom thinks, was what the Apostle was about to say, but considering the hint sufficient, he concludes the sentence with an encomium of the Colossians. The enemy has not routed your ranks as yet. I rejoice to *see* you, being in spirit present among you, drawn up in unbroken phalanx against the enemy, and your faith still firm and unshaken. The creed you were taught by Epaphras, that Jesus Christ is your Creator, Redeemer, Mediator, in this *walk*, or persevere. Christ is the *way*; walk in this way, which leads to life. Christ is the *root*; adhere to him, and from him draw the life of your souls. Christ is the *foundation*; on this foundation build your faith and hope. What the tree is without root, the house without foundation, man is without Christ. Cling to the faith as you have been taught it, and *abound in it* (the Greek has *it*), that is, make progress in Christian grace, and rejoice with thanksgiving for the privilege you have received, the hope to which you look forward. Then the Apostle repeats the caution already given in verse 4. *See that none deceive you*. The Greek has plunder you, the Syriac and Arabic, rob and spoil you; Saint Chrysostom, rob you and steal your faith away. *Through philosophy and empty fallacy*, or deceit. The system taught by Simon appears to have contained many expressions borrowed or translated from the language of the magian philosophers of the east, which Saint Paul calls *sublimitate sermonum* in verse 4, and legends and fables about angels and æons, the object of which was to substitute the adoration of these imaginary powers for the worship of Christ. All this was *human tradition*. The

traditions of paganism, however distorted, were at least derived originally from primæval truth, known to man by revelation from God in the earliest ages of the world, but the magian philosophy was from its beginning human invention and nothing else, and founded in mere imposture. Such as it was, however, it had widely influenced the philosophies of western lands, and formed in Saint Paul's days *the elements of the instruction of the learned world*. It was this system, reproduced by Simon under some new phrases, intended to pass it off as the religion of Christ, which Saint Paul speaks of 1 Tim. vi. 20, as that which they falsely call their *gnosis*, or knowledge. It is not *according to Christ*, is radically opposed to all his teaching. For in Christ *all the pleroma of Deity corporeally dwells*. This word *pleroma* is a well-known term of the magian philosophy, and signifies the aggregate of all the great spiritual intelligences which govern the world, and of which they admitted Christ to be one. As in their system, the Supreme Being was non-existent, the *pleroma*, was the supreme object of their cultus and adoration. This is not the doctrine of Christ; for in Christ the whole pleroma, or fulness of Deity, dwells and is from eternity inherent corporeally. The word corporeally is not here opposed to *spiritually*, but to *figuratively*. Not in figure, as of old in the propitiatory, but truly, really, and substantially. Not by operation, but in substance. Not by grace only, as in holy angels and men, but by hypostatic union. Not in his soul only, but in his body also. The divine Person of the Word is united with the human nature by a double bond, one spiritual, which unites his human soul with the Word; the other corporeal, which to the same Divine Word unites his body. Therefore in Christ dwells, or eternally inheres, all wisdom, science, truth, because he is God. And with this wisdom, you, in your degree, as members depending on the Head, are also filled. He is not an angel or an æon, but the Head of all the principalities and powers that reign in heaven. And since in Him dwells and remains all the

plenitude of Deity, and the plenitude of wisdom, it is to Him that you should have recourse, not to angels, otherwise you will be forsaking the Lord and King for the ministers and servants.

11. In whom also you were circumcised with circumcision not done by hand, in the despoiling of the body of the flesh ; but in the circumcision of Christ :

12. Buried together with him in Baptism, in which you also rose again through faith of the operation of God who raised him from the dead.

13. And you, when you were dead in sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he has with him quickened to life, forgiving you all sins.

14. Blotting out what was against us, the writing of the decree ; which was contrary to us, and took it from the midst, affixing it to the cross.

15. And stripping the principalities and the powers paraded them boldly, leading them openly in triumph in himself.

The heretics, while rejecting the law of Moses, and the God who was its Author, affected to adhere to some of its ceremonies, and among them the rite of circumcision, chiefly out of opposition to the teaching of the Apostles, and were endeavouring to unsettle the minds of the Colossian Christians on this point, as well as on some others referred to below. In his reply, Saint Paul tells the Colossians that they have no need of external circumcision. You have already been circumcised, not by the rite done by human hands, the excision of a portion of the flesh of the material body, but *with the circumcision of Christ*, or which was instituted by Christ. And he goes on to explain in the next verse what this is. With Christ you have been buried in Baptism, the immersion in the water figuring the burial of Christ ; with him *you are risen again*, which was signified by the emersion from it. And this *through faith*, the principal condition

required; indeed the only condition absolutely and imperatively required for Baptism, being the profession of the faith of the Catholic Church. This profession had to be publicly made before the assembled congregation, and the symbol, or *credo*, differing slightly in its form in different countries, was expressly drawn up for this use and purpose. But the faith of the Church is substantially and by inference summed up and implied in one article of belief, faith in *the operation of God in Christ's resurrection from the dead*. For if this is true, it puts the seal upon all Christ's teaching when on earth, and all the teaching of the Apostles and the successors of their ministry, since his ascension into heaven. The reality of this resurrection is what the heretics deny; you are Christians because you believe it true. Pagans as you were, *dead in sins*, involved in the guilt of actual mortal sin, and helplessly enthralled to the concupiscences of the flesh, it is nevertheless perfectly true, and you are required to believe this, and entitled to rejoice in the certainty of the belief, that God has by your Baptism given you a new and real spiritual life, as real and true as the life to which Christ rose from the grave and lives for evermore, and all the sins of your former lives are in the waters of Baptism as completely and absolutely washed away as if they had never been, and you can be quite secure that they will not be brought up against you at the last great day. Saint Paul insists on this forgiveness of sins, because it is the central argument of this Epistle, which was mainly written to reassure the Colossian Christians, who had been rendered, or were in danger of being rendered, anxious and uneasy regarding it, by the cavils of the crafty opponents of the faith. You require no circumcision, and no initiation into any hidden system of philosophy. God has in truth raised you to life, *donans vobis omnia delicta*. All sin, actual and original. *In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die death*, was the terrible decree that sounded in the ears of our first father in Paradise, Gen. ii. 17. And to this decree we, each one of the human race, every child of Adam born into the

world, have severally set our own sign-manual, *the handwriting on the decree*, by the actual sin which we have severally added to the guilt of the original transgression. But this damning bond, this recognition under our own hands of the awful debt we had incurred, and must have paid, Christ has cancelled, torn up, blotted out, taken out of the midst, conveyed out of court. It was *against* us, *contrary* to us, must have condemned us; he has taken it away by his death, and *affixed it to the cross*. Temporal death still remains, but is changed into a blessing, for it is the gate of salvation; death eternal we have not to fear, for Christ has taken away the sentence, with our acceptance plainly written on it, and nailed it to his cross. Grotius says it was the custom to nail antiquated edicts to a cross, as a public notification that they were no longer in force; but undoubtedly the reference of the Apostle is to the cross on which Christ suffered, and by his death took away the sin of the world. And after the victory came the triumph. He carried with him into heaven, and will finally and fully do so at the last day, the spoils of the principalities and powers of darkness, (those very *angels* whom the heretics direct you to adore,) the souls of men redeemed from hell, their bodies raised from the grave. And in this continued procession of triumph, to the end of the world, the evil spirits, the tempters of mankind, are led captive, chained to the chariot wheel of their exulting conqueror, exhibited to God, to angels, and to men, openly baffled and defeated. Pagan worship and pagan vice gave way to the love and adoration of Christ. Triumphant over them *in himself*, for by his own power and merit alone the victory was won. There is another and more ordinary interpretation of this passage, which supposes the Apostle to refer to the law of Moses as the handwriting of the decree, which Christ removed and nailed to the cross. But the Colossian Christians, to whom this was addressed, were converts from Paganism, and never subject to the Mosaic ceremonial law, nor is there, in any other part of the Epistle,

anything directly controverting the obligation of obedience to it. And in this sense it is difficult to assign an intelligible meaning to the words *chirographum decreti*, or as the Greek signifies, *decretis*. The explanation given above is in substance that of Saint Chrysostom, who says that the Apostle nowhere else uses language so sublime.

16. Let no one, therefore, judge you in meat or drink, or in part of a festival day, or new moon, or sabbath.

17. Which are a shadow of things to come ; but the body of Christ.

18. Let no one lead you astray willingly in humility and religion of the angels, which he has not seen, walking vainly inflated by the sense of his flesh.

19. And not holding the head from which the whole body, by joints and bands supplied with nourishment and compacted, grows into the increase of God.

20. If therefore you died with Christ from the elements of this world, why do you still judge as if living in the world ?

21. Touch not, nor taste, nor handle ;

22. Which are all to perish in the use : after the precepts and doctrines of men ?

23. Which have indeed reason of wisdom in superstition and humility, and not to the sparing of the body ; not in any honour to the filling of the flesh.

These are some of the arbitrary commands and precepts of the heretical teachers, on which they insisted as important articles of the Christian religion. Those enumerated in verse 16 are apparently derived from the Mosaic ritual, because Saint Paul says they are a shadow of things to come, and the reality is Christ. Those named in verses 20, 21, are probably of Pythagorean or Magian origin, derived exclusively from *precepts and doctrines of men*. Among the former were the distinction between clean and unclean animals used for food ; *in drink*, perhaps the prohibition of the use of wine,

the selection of festivals for observation, some of those of the old law being arbitrarily rejected, and others retained, as were the new moons and sabbaths, according to St. Chrysostom. The Syriac has the partition or apportionment of festival days. These observances were only a *shadow*, indicating the coming reality, which was the religion of Christ. The Apostle cannot be, as some modern heretics pretend, speaking here of the Christian festivals, for though these are in a sense *a shadow of a reality to come*, they should for that very reason be observed until it comes. Verse 18 refers to the superstitious worship of angels. The heretics asserted that it would have been unworthy of the dignity of the only-begotten Son of God to be *sent* to us, and be our guide to the Father, and that as in the law, so also in the Gospel, God has effected all by the ministry of angels. By this feigned humility they sought to introduce a false and superstitious adoration of angels, as the mediators to whom we are to have recourse, instead of Christ. St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, Gagne. *Let no one lead you astray.* The Greek word *βραβεύς* meant a judge or umpire who assigned the prizes at the games, and *καταβραβεύω* means to judge a prize to any competitor unjustly. *Let no one cheat or cozen you out of the prize you have fairly earned by believing in Jesus Christ, namely, the certainty that the only-begotten Son of God is himself your Saviour and Mediator with the Father.* The words *volens in humilitate* are obscure from the extreme brevity of expression; the meaning probably is, wishing to appear humble and devout to the angels. *Quæ non vidit*, the Greek has, walking where he has not seen, intruding into mysteries which God has not revealed, proud and complacent in the assumed possession of a wisdom which is wholly carnal, of human invention, or the creation of his own foolish brain, not revealed by God. *And not holding the head.* It is evident that the heretics must have denied that Christ is the Head of the Church, for which reason Saint Paul insists so fre-

quently on this statement, in this Epistle, and in that to the Ephesians, Eph. iv. 15, Col. i. 18, ii. 10. They called him an eon, or intelligence of great power, but not supreme, and later teachers of the same philosophy, if not Simon, held that Saint John Baptist was the greater of the two, an error which the Gospel of Saint John was mainly written to correct, together with other false doctrines of the followers of Cerinthus. Saint Paul goes on to affirm that the whole society of the servants of God, in heaven and earth, is dependent on Jesus Christ, as the body on the head. The *nexus* and *conjunctiones* which unite this body together are the pastors and sacraments of the Church, by aid of which the body is *supplied with spiritual nourishment*, and *constructed* or built up, so as to *grow*, as the human body grows from childhood to maturity, into *the increase of God*, the extension among the nations which God intended for it, and the glory of the Saints who reflect God's image and likeness variously, and in each individual case partially, to the sight of men. If, therefore, he goes on, *you died with Christ to the elements of the world*, that is the current and popular philosophy of the day, which directed the thoughts and sentiments of the educated portion of mankind. The same expression is used in verse 8. This philosophy was not strictly speaking Pagan, for the Pagan traditions of Europe were represented by its religion, but was imported from the east, from the days of Pythagoras onward, and was an adaptation of the Oriental or Magian system to the ideas of the western nations, as far as this was practicable. It was in its root and foundation absolutely opposed to the Hebrew traditions, which the Church accepted and embodied, and therefore the Apostle says that Christ *died to it*, and you, who were educated under its influence, *died to it with him*, when you were baptised. Why then do you *judge*—in the Greek, why do you dogmatise, or allow yourselves to be dogmatised to, as if still under the teaching of a worldly philosophy? *Touch not, taste not*, certain kinds of food proscribed by the Pythagoreans or their

successors. Nor *handle* women, whom the followers of Pythagoras made it a rule not to touch. These outward things, as the Syriac version reads, are of *perishable use*, which may be compared with the saying of Christ, that man is not defiled by what enters his body, but by the evil which comes forth from his heart. These philosophical precepts and prohibitions are of purely human authority, only *commandments of men*, and have no divine sanction or authority. They are put forward, indeed, on alleged reasons of philosophy, and on some superstitious pretext or other, and are practised in an affected humility and voluntary mortification of the body ; but having no authority from Christ they are not to be observed or held in honour by his faithful followers.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Jesus Christ is our Way, our Root, our Foundation, and our Head, v. 6, 7, 10. Our Way, along which we are not to take a few tentative steps only, but to *walk* throughout all the course of this mortal life until its end. *In ipso ambulate*. By continuance in the communion of his holy Catholic Church, until our lives' end ; by firm adherence to his faith and doctrine ; by the habitual contemplation of his holy life ; by the endeavour, in our degree, to imitate and reflect it ; by frequenting the holy sacraments which unite us to him ; and by union with him in prayer. For the way of the just marches onward like the splendour of the morning, and increases to the glory of the perfect day (Prov. iv. 18). The Root of the tree is unseen by human eyes, but its potent vitality and its specific nature are both plainly visible in the spreading boughs, the countless foliage, the lovely bloom, the precious fruit. Christ is not seen by mortal eyes, but his Church has extended her arms over the world, God is everywhere worshipped in the beauty of the ritual of heaven, lives of Saints adorn her chronicle, fruits of piety and sanctity are everywhere rendered to God's praise and the happiness of

man. Christian people are the temple of God, and the temple of God is holy (1 Cor. iii. 17), because it has Christ for its foundation. It is yet rising in all its splendour and beauty, and when it is completed he will come from heaven to dwell in it, as his presence descended mystically in a cloud (3 Reg. viii. 10, 11) on the temple built by Solomon, with such unendurable brilliancy and glory that even the priests fled from before it. If such was the effect of the figure and the shadow, what will be the glory of the reality? Great shall be the glory of the latter house, more than of the first, saith the God of armies (Agg. ii. 10), for in it God will give peace. The head of Christ on earth was crowned with thorns, and his body pierced with wounds and torn with the scourge. But the head which once wore the Crown of Thorns is now crowned with everlasting glory in the heavens. Of his kingdom there shall be no end. The members of the mystical body which from this Head draws their life, are in a degree partakers still of the passion he endured when in this mortal life, and are tortured and wounded by pain and suffering and sorrow. But from cross and grave Christ rose and ascended to the summit of glory and happiness on high, and where the head is the members will be, co-partners with him in his life of immortality.



CHAPTER III.

Therefore if you rose together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.

2. Mind the things that are above, not those on earth.

3. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

4. When Christ shall appear, your life, then you also shall appear with him in glory.

Chapter III. In this chapter the Apostle exhorts the Colossian Christians to mortify the desires of the body, and put on the new life and character of the religion they have embraced; and adds special injunctions for wives and husbands, children and parents, servants and masters.

In chapter ii. 12, Saint Paul said that in Baptism we died with Christ, and rose again. And in verse 20 he said, if you died with Christ, why, as if still living in the world, do you regulate your lives by the principles of a mundane philosophy? Here he adds, since with Christ you *rose* to a life spiritual and divine, seek not the pleasures and advantages of earth, but the eternal joy of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand. Christ as God is the equal of the Father in majesty; as man, he is second to him. And the Scripture, using human language in condescension to our ideas, expresses this by saying, that he sits at God's right hand. The phrase is of very frequent occurrence, being used by Saint Paul Rom. viii. 34, Heb. i. 3, viii. 1, xii. 2, by Saint Mark, xvi. 19, by Saint Peter, Act. ii. 33, 1 Pet. iii. 22, and by Saint Stephen, Act. vii. 56. It signifies the highest place of honour, grace, and glory. *Mind* therefore, *sapite*, things that are above, love, hope for, meditate on, set your affections on, the things above. *Sursum corda*, love heaven, not earth. *For you died*, not you are dead. Christ died, but is not dead; on

the contrary, his *life is hidden in God*. But he died to earth, and the life he lives, the life you live in him now by grace, and the life you shall live with him in glory in eternity, is hidden from the eyes of men. Hidden in the heart of God, its birthplace and its home. The holy angels know and honour it, but men despise it ; *the world knoweth us not*, 1 Joh. iii. 1. Yet one day it shall be revealed in the sight of all men, when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, and then you also shall *appear with him in glory*. For we know, Saint John says, that *when he appears, we shall be like him* (1 Joh. iii. 3). Like him in the glory in which he sits at God's right hand ; like him in mind, through an express image of God, or by the word of the mind, which is like God, and exactly represents him ; like him in quality, holy, blessed, immortal, impassible, glorious, the body of our humility being made like the body of the splendour of Christ. Then we shall know the nobility, grandeur, and felicity of the sons of God.

5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth : fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence, and avarice, which is the service of images.

6. For which the anger of God is coming upon the sons of incredulity.

7. In which you also at one time walked, when you lived in them.

Saint Paul here uses the word *membra* in a figurative sense. In the Christian there are two *men*, one of earth, that is Adam, from whom he inherits a nature subject to concupiscence ; the other from heaven, Christ our Lord, through whom he is regenerate, into whom he is grafted, and who lives in him by grace. The members of the earthly man are vices and evil desires ; Christian graces are members of the heavenly. For the growth to maturity of the heavenly *man*, the earthly *man* must perish ; the death of the one is the life of the other. In Baptism the earthly man began to die ;

by mortification his death is daily carried out. In Baptism he died to sin, and sin was for the past remitted, for the future renounced, but concupiscence, the root of sin, remained, and this must be eradicated by mortification. The *members* of the earthly man are the various sins which Saint Paul proceeds to classify, simple fornication, defilement of the body, degrading passions of the soul, generally all desire of evil things, and avarice, by which last term Saint Jerome understands an insatiable desire of carnal pleasure. This the Apostle says is idol-worship, either because the idolatry of those days fostered it, or because wicked desires become like idol-deities, to the service of which the soul is enthralled. On account of these things, he adds, the wrath of God is coming upon sons of unbelief. The same statement occurs in Eph. v. 6, and it may possibly be a prediction of the earthquake by which the cities of Colossæ and Laodicea, and others in the neighbourhood, were shortly afterwards overthrown, as observed in the preface. It is evident that what the Apostle here denounces is not any occasional fall from holiness on the part of believers in Christ, but the shocking ethical system of the heretics, which inculcated and counselled systematic rebellion against the commands of the Creator of the world, whom they denounced as an evil demon. In these things, the Apostle says, *you at one time walked*, while you were pagans, before your conversion to the Christian faith. He says this, St. Chrysostom remarks, to put them to shame, but in order to soften the severity of his words immediately adds, *while you lived in them*, which you do not now, having changed your manner of life.

8. But now do you lay aside also all : anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy language from your mouth.

9. Do not lie one to another, stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds.

10. And putting on the new, him who is renewed to knowledge, according to the image of him who created him.

11. Where is not Gentile and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, Barbarian and Scythian, slave and free, but all and in all Christ.

12. Put you on, therefore, as elect of God holy and beloved bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, modesty, patience ;

13. Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if any against any has complaint ; as the Lord forgave you, so also do you.

14. But above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection,

15. And let the peace of Christ exult in your hearts, in which also you were called in one body : and be grateful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in grace singing in your hearts to God.

17. All you do in word or work, all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to the God and Father through him.

Not only those graver sins in which you no longer live, are to be laid aside, but also minor faults against God and your neighbour, anger, malice, and violent and unseemly language. See the note on Eph. iv. 31, and that on Eph. iv. 22, 24, as to the distinction drawn by the Apostle between the *old* and the *new man*. The Greek has, *now that you have put off* the old man, *and put on* the new, that is, in your Christian profession. For as the faults and vices of the pagan life are the result and outcome of the influence of the evil spirit which dwells within the heart, so the graces of the Christian life will, if encouraged, grow from the presence of Christ within the soul. But, as the reading of the Vulgate would imply, the old tendencies, having still their root in human nature, and possibly in habit, will still have to be repressed, and the Christian life daily renewed and carefully cultivated. The

new man is renewed, according to the Syriac, *through knowledge*, according to the likeness of Him who made him. By learning more and more of the character of God, through communion with Him, the Christian grows into his likeness. The Greek and the Vulgate read renewed *into* knowledge, advances continually in the knowledge of God, and consequently in his likeness. This likeness of God is the perfection of man's nature, not following any special or particular type, or nationality, or class; its model or pattern is not Gentile or Jew, Greek or barbarian, civilised or savage, slave or free; but wholly Christ, and Christ in all. The mention of *Scythians* suggests the possibility that, as it is known that these people had formerly invaded Western Asia, there may have been traces or traditions of a colony of them in Phrygia. Your real nationality, whatever it was originally, and your real state and condition, whatever it may be by the provisions of human law, is now the *elect* people of God, *holy, and beloved* of God, of angels, and of saints. Therefore *put on*, or exhibit in your life and conversation, the characteristics of this condition, mercy and kindness, humility and patience, bearing with and forgiving the faults and imperfections of one another, since you have so many of your own. Forgive, as the Lord (the Greek has, Christ) forgave you. *Above all, have* charity. The Greek has no verb, supplying *put on* from the previous sentence. *Above* all, because it is the highest grace. Charity is the love of God, and of man for God's sake, and this is the highest motive for affection, for kindness, and well doing. The *bond of perfection* is a Hebraism for the *most perfect bond*, that which binds the souls of men together by the noblest and truest bond, the relation they bear to their Creator. And *let the peace of Christ exult in your hearts*. The Greek verb *βραβεύετω* might either mean, as the Vulgate understands it, carry off the prize of victory, be victorious over anger, or dissension, or cupidity, or pride. Or it may mean, adjudge the prize of victory, that is, preside, moderate, and rule. And if between you there arise con-

troversy or difference, let *the peace of Christ*, not anger, or pride, or passion, determine it. In this sense the word is understood by Saint Chrysostom and Theodoret, and this is the sense of the Syriac: *Let the peace of Christ govern your hearts*. For you all form one *body*, and the portions of one and the same body do not fight one with another. *In peace*, therefore, you are called. *And be grateful*, in the Syriac, *give thanks to God*. Saint Jerome, however, as quoted by Erasmus, understands it gracious, amiable, kind and easy, for this contributes to *peace*. Let *the word of Christ*, that is the teaching of Christ, which you have received from Epaphras and other instructors, dwell in your minds and hearts habitually and abundantly, so as to make you rich in *all* wisdom, often speaking of it to one another. The words *with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs* may perhaps be more fitly taken with the participle *cantantes* which follows them. For the distinction between these see on Eph. v. 19, 20. Singing *in grace*, that is, in thanksgiving, or otherwise, with sweetness, care, and correctness, so as to give pleasure to yourselves and those who hear you. *In your hearts*, that is, with your hearts, heartily, sincerely, not with the voice only, and the heart not in harmony with what you sing. In all you say or do, *in word or work*, invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, not the names of angels, like the followers of Simon; and through him, and not through angels, give thanks to God the Father. So Theodoret and Saint Chrysostom understand it. Saint Thomas says that the precept is also to be taken in a directly affirmative sense, but that to fulfil it, it is not necessary that everything should be formally and in act referred to God, but in the habit of the mind, and is satisfied when our words and deeds are such as to promote God's glory. Whoever acts or speaks against the glory or the commands of God, acts in opposition to this precept of the Apostle. The perfection of charity is when all things are actually, or at least effectually, referred to God's glory in the name and power of Christ. For then all we do will be God's

praise, and pious and meritorious in his sight. Do all *through* Christ, as your mediator and pontiff; *with* Christ, as your head; *in* Christ, in his spirit, motive, and intention.

18. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fit in the Lord.

19. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter towards them.

20. Sons, obey your parents through all; for this is pleasing to the Lord.

21. Fathers, do not provoke your sons to indignation, that they become not pusillanimous.

22. Slaves, obey through all your carnal masters, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God.

23. Whatever you do, work heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men:

24. Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the retribution of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ.

25. For who does wrong will receive that which he has done unjustly; and there is not acceptance of persons with God.

These injunctions are almost verbally the same as those given in the Epistle to the Ephesians v. 22—vi. 9, but more pointedly and briefly expressed. They were rendered necessary by the doctrine of the heretics, who represented Jesus Christ as an opponent of the Creator of the world and God of the Old Testament, from whose dominion, as they pretended, he came to deliver mankind. The Apostle, in effect, maintains that as Christ came, not to do away with the law of Moses, nor yet to re-enact it, but to *fulfil* it and present the reality of which it was a symbol and a shadow, so he came not to abrogate and unsettle the constitutions of nature and society, which he has himself ordained for the guidance of mankind in this mortal life, and which were preserved in

tradition, more or less perfectly, from the beginning of the world, by all nations of men; but to preserve them, while giving to them a fuller explanation and a higher meaning. *As is fit in the Lord*, so far as the law of Christ permits. *Love your wives, and be not bitter to them*, be indulgent to their faults or imperfections, recognising all they endeavour to do well. Obey your parents *through all*, in all respects, and through all apparent discouragement, for the obedience itself *is pleasing to the Lord*, who set the example of it in his own early life at Nazareth. Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged in God's service, or lose confidence in the benevolence and goodwill of their seniors. Slaves are reminded in verse 25 that the master who ill-treats them, as a pagan master possibly might, will have to answer to the Great Judge at the last day, who will render to them the same usage they have dealt out to those now in their power. Human laws may give you no redress, but *who does wrong will receive that which he has done*, and before that Judge all are equal. They should not, therefore, seek revenge, but rather pray for the unjust master's conversion and salvation.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

Christ, our Head and our Life, rising from the dead, left this lower world, and ascending to the heaven of heavens, sat down on the right hand of the Father. So let us, in heart, abandon this earth, the abode of sorrow and corruption, and continually ascend, in longing and desire, to Him at whose right hand there are *delights even to the end* (Ps. xv. 11), which can leave nothing more to wish for, flowing from the fountain of glory and immortality. Living in the hope to share the glory of Christ, live, as far as possible, worthily of that hope, live as Christ lived, be another Christ. This earthly life is not our life; it is something else, something or other, but *that* it is not, says Saint Chrysostom. Now we are sons of God; what we shall be we do not yet

know, for it has not yet been shown to us (1 Joh. iii. 2). If Saint John did not know, much less do we. To all appearance Christians are weak and miserable, like other men. That is because the world does not really see them any more than it sees Christ, who no longer shows himself to the eyes of men, but is hidden in the bosom of the Father. And so our life, our real life, the life eternal and glorious to which we are entitled, is *hidden with Christ in God*, and the world sees it not. The bosom of God is the eternal seat and source and principle of the life of Christ; so is it the seat, and the source, and the principle of our true and glorious life. The bosom of the Father is the throne and the centre in which Christ reposes, for ever and ever; so is it the seat and the centre of the glory for which we hope. In the bosom of the Father the life of the adopted sons is *hidden with Christ*; it does not yet appear even what we are now, much less what we shall be. As yet we hold this divine life in spirit only. We have the seed of glory, but in the seed the tree is not as yet apparent, though it is there. In the condition of grace, which precedes glory, the nobility, the grandeur, the felicity, the imperishableness of our divine adoption is not yet apparent. For all these are in Christ, and Christ is hidden in God. Christ is our Head, and these are all therefore in his body also, but not yet made manifest. Christ is *hidden in God*, but not for ever. The day will come when he will appear, and when he does, we shall fully know what it is to be the sons of God, the glory and the happiness of this divine adoption. When he appears, he will appear *in glory*, and we also with him, in his likeness, for he is our Brother, and in his Father's likeness, for his Father is also ours.

CHAPTER IV.

Masters, what is just and right, do to your slaves, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

2. Persist in prayer, watching in it, in thanksgiving ;

3. Praying also for us, that God may open to us a door of the word, to tell the mystery of Christ, on account of which also I am bound.

4. That I may so manifest it as I ought to speak.

Chapter IV. In this chapter the Apostle recommends constant prayer, and wisdom and caution to those outside ; and concludes the Epistle with various salutations.

Verse 1 belongs in sense to Chapter III., and seems not to have been included in it only by an inadvertence. The Greek word *ισότης* means equality, a recognition of that *equality* which is implied in the statement last made, because you also have a Lord in heaven, and before him all are equal. He will not, at the last day *accept persons*, regard the temporary accidents of this mortal life.

Recurring to what is common to all, the Apostle notes three conditions of prayer. It is to be instant, assiduous, persevering ; 2, watchful, attentive, devout ; 3, grateful, humble, mindful of blessings received. As prayer is the channel through which the grace of God descends to us, and we are continually in want of grace, we should continually pray. And as God is the King of all the creatures and all the ages, and we are nothing, and wholly dependent on him for existence, we should pray attentively and devoutly. And gratitude for blessings received, with confidence in their continuance, opens to us the merciful hand of God. Saint Paul urges in particular that the Colossian Christians should pray for him, that God would open to him the door, not of his prison, but of *the word*, that is, accord him the opportunity of making known to men *the mystery* of salvation in *Christ*, the proclamation of which was the cause of his imprisonment, *for which I am bound*. A *mystery*, because pre-

viously unknown to the greater part of the Gentile world. Verse 4 seems to refer to his approaching interview with Cæsar, and he uses the same expressions in Eph. vi. 20.

5. Walk in wisdom to those who are without, redeeming the time.

6. Let your words always be in grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each.

Deal prudently and cautiously with pagans and others who are not of the Church, making the best use of such opportunities as are afforded you. Your conversation should be seasoned with the salt of wisdom, but also with *grace*, agreeable and pleasant, and this rule will generally suggest an answer to any questions or observations they address to you. The remark is applicable to all times, and especially to the conversation of priests and religious, whose language should be courteous and pleasant, as well as wise. Saint Chrysostom, on this passage, observes that in dealing with persons of rank and station in the pagan world, Christians should not refuse to cultivate their society, if it can be done without danger. If there is opportunity for quiet interchange of sentiment, this does not necessarily involve flattery or sanction to wrong. And they should be treated with every respect, as far as no wrong is done to piety. The rich and great should receive greater deference than others, because their minds are weaker, and they are almost inevitably self-important and conceited. Greater freedom may be used with the poor, because they are commonly, from habit of life, of tougher and more enduring mental consistency, more patient, brave, and self-contained. But in both cases the end aimed at should be edification, and if the rich man is treated with the greater deference, it is not for his riches, but his frailty.

7. All my circumstances will be made known to you by Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord,

8. Whom I sent to you for this very purpose, that he may know how you are situated, and console your hearts.

9. With Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is of you. They will make known to you all that is doing here.

10. There salute you Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received commands : if he comes to you, receive him :

11. And Jesus, who is called the Just, who are of the circumcision ; these only are my helpers in the kingdom of God, who have been a solace to me.

12. Epaphras salutes you, who is of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, always solicitous for you in prayers, that you stand perfect and full in all the will of God.

13. For I bear him witness that he has much labour for you, and for those who are at Laodicea and those at Hierapolis.

14. There salute you Luke the physician, the beloved, and Demas.

15. Salute the brethren who are at Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house.

16. And when this Epistle has been read to you, cause it to be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans ; and do you read that which is of the Laodiceans.

17. And say to Archippus : See the ministry which thou didst receive in the Lord, that thou fill it.

18. The salvation by my hand, of Paul. Remember my chains. Grace with you. Amen.

Tychicus, the bearer of this letter, a faithful minister of God, and my fellow-labourer in Christ, will tell you how I am circumstanced. I have sent him for this purpose, and to bring me intelligence concerning you, and console you by informing you of the favourable prospect of my early release. I have sent Onesimus with him (Onesimus carried also the Epistle to Philemon, of which below), and these two will tell you all. It is observable that the former part of the commission seems to have been entrusted to Tychicus only, and not to Onesimus, who was a recent convert. Saint Chrysostom praises the humility of the Apostle, first in God's

kingdom, crowned, caught up to heaven, but yet speaking of a slave as his brother and fellow-slave. Aristarchus was a Macedonian of Thessalonica, a former fellow-traveller of St. Paul, see Act. xix. 29, xx. 4, and seems to have accompanied the Apostle to Rome, xxvii. 2. His name occurs also in the Epistle to Philemon, 24. Saint Mark is called, in the Greek, *sister's son* to Barnabas. You have received commands concerning him, doubtless, Saint Chrysostom thinks, from Saint Barnabas, to which Saint Paul here adds his own recommendation, *if he comes receive him*. It is well known that he had occasioned the separation of the two Apostles eleven years before, Act xv. 37. Epaphras was evidently at Rome with Saint Paul. Baronius thinks he was bishop of Colossæ, and Archippus, mentioned in verse 17, the deacon. *He has much labour for you*, the Greek has *much zeal*. Nymphas is a masculine name, as appears from the pronoun in the Greek text, *his house*. The mention of the *letter of the Laodiceans* has occasioned some discussion. Saint Chrysostom and Theodoret think the Laodicean Christians had written a letter to Saint Paul, to which this Epistle is the reply, addressed equally to both Churches, because both were equally interested in the questions with which it deals. This seems the more probable from the expression, the *epistle of the Laodiceans*, not the *epistle to them*. Other writers, however, think Saint Paul wrote, and here refers to, another Epistle to the Laodiceans, which has been lost. Others again, that he refers to the Epistle to the Ephesians, but names the Laodiceans, because that town was nearer to Colossæ, and they could more readily obtain a copy from thence. The question remains uncertain. The concluding verse 18 is the only portion of this Epistle which Saint Paul wrote with his own hand, for identification, as was his custom.

COROLLARY OF PIETY.

The Christians of Colossæ dwelt in a remote country, surrounded by a pagan population, under a pagan government, their Apostle a prisoner in a distant land, and as they supposed in imminent danger of death; his legate, the Bishop of Ephesus, also far away, in attendance upon him;

their own bishop also, through force of circumstances, an absentee. They were invaded by the emissaries of a false and fatal system of philosophy, subtle, pretentious, and imposing, who laboured to unsettle their confidence in the faith they had been taught, and the teachers who conveyed it to them, and to whose arguments they knew not how to reply. Under the circumstances this beautiful and consoling letter must have come to them like a gleam of light from heaven, as if to assure them that in their temporary dereliction and perplexity God had not forgotten them, and that the Apostle of the nations, amid the crowd of anxieties and troubles with which he was surrounded, was still solicitous for their safety and their welfare. And this is an epitome of the history and condition of the Church of God in all times. Her Divine Pontiff and teacher has, to all appearance, left her, and gone; heretics and unbelievers ceaselessly assail her faith; the greater portion of the world is still pagan; the governments of earth are, in general, not her friends. The intensity of Satan's malice against the Church of Christ can in some degree be measured and estimated by the ceaseless and irreconcilable warfare which heretics, urged on by Satan's machinations and inspired by his spirit, though they know it not, continually wage against her doctrine, her sacraments, her priesthood, her prelates, or her God. There is scarcely a corner of the earth, however remote, where they are not at work. But this malice itself is in turn an indication how terrible must be the dismay and consternation which the triumph of her truth and sanctity carries into the ranks of the powers of darkness, how they cower before her advance, how intolerable to them is every victory she wins, every soul she saves. But God does not abandon his Church, though in the eyes of the world he seems to have forgotten her. His presence still dwells on her altars, his Vicar still guides her helm—though, like Saint Paul, a prisoner in Rome—His Spirit still animates, directs, purifies, encourages, leads on through perseverance to final victory. The anger of God is coming upon the sons of incredulity, whatever appearances may seem to indicate.

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